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LETTERS  
ON THE  
EDUCATION OF A SURGEON,  
AND THE  
DUTIES AND QUALIFICATIONS  
OF  
A Physician:  
ADDRESSED TO  
JAMES GREGORY, M.D.



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LETTERS  
ON  
PROFESSIONAL CHARACTER  
AND  
MANNERS:  
ON  
THE EDUCATION OF A SURGEON,  
AND THE  
DUTIES AND QUALIFICATIONS  
OF  
A Physician:

ADDRESSED TO  
JAMES GREGORY, M.D.  
PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE IN THE  
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

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BY JOHN BELL, SURGEON.

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*There is a public mischief in your mirth,  
It plagues your Country.*

COWPER.

*Ergo ignem cujus scintillas ipse dedisti,  
Flagrantem late, et rapientem cuncta videbis.*

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EDINBURGH:

*Printed by John Moir, Royal Bank Close,*  
AND SOLD BY ALL THE BOOKSELLERS IN LONDON  
AND EDINBURGH.

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1810.





## ADVERTISEMENT.

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**T**HE task I have undertaken is painful, but it is a duty to my much injured profession, and I have one great consolation ever present to my mind, that I am not wounding the reputation of a good, nor the peace of an innocent man : I endeavour to repress the aggressions of a privileged and powerful assailant, daring in calumny, and indifferent to all the decencies and proprieties of polished life : To repel his malice, only after the unanimous voice of my profession has declared it such as has never been known, and should not be endured.

It is ever to be lamented, that Dr James Gregory, Professor of Practice in the most celebrated seminary of education that has grown up in modern times ; the son of a respected Father, and the companion, from his early years, of many

able and liberal men ; trained from his youth in the best parts of learning ; the appointed defender of his profession, and of its morals ; should descend from the dignity of his station, to enmities and calumnies plainly connected with his interests, and should so entirely fail in the virtues of generosity, truth, and candour, as to make his way of life a theme for all tongues,—a lesson for all ages.

This gentleman, after enjoying the inestimable blessings of a liberal education, and virtuous example, was raised, at an early period of life, to that eminence from whence he might survey all the roads to excellence and happiness ; a station which should have filled his heart with thankfulness, and inspired benevolent and kindly feelings towards all around him. His birth and high duties should have created the virtues in which he is wanting,—virtues which he will surely find as needful to present happiness, as to lasting reputation.

Nor at that period, when ambitious and vain thoughts began to display his natural propensities, and disturb the even tenor of his life, was he ever roused or insulted : Never was he assailed in his reputation, nor invaded in the honourable

and peaceful pursuits of practice: Never were his insulting opinions, his restless politics, his suspicious alliances, or rude manners, and inquiet life, made subjects of reproach. But at last, universal aggression has released us from all usual restraints ; and since the needful duty has fallen to my lot, of chastising this rude and blundering Physician, my privilege will hardly be questioned by those who remember his early writings.

There are many, I fear, the best of men, who, even if they could condescend to feel as I feel, would not judge as I judge : who can ill endure the language of recrimination, those bitter reproaches with which a writer on subjects like these is apt to corrupt his own ear, and harden his heart. But my own injuries should never have incited me to this odious task, nor sympathy with those of others, had there remained the slightest hope that a spirit so rancorous could weary or be at rest, or cease to cause unhappiness to others, but by being subdued. Let all who might blame me, remember, that the unresisting Professors of our University, and the worthiest physicians in this city, are this day reviled without a cause, in every town and province of the British dominions ! condemned in every

foreign country without the shadow of offence or guilt ! That the public ear is rankly abused. Indeed, should I be blamed for want of moderation, I shall almost feel as if I were rebuked for not looking calmly on the ruin of my profession, and the sufferings of guiltless, guileless men.

But it would be a presumption, to fear that I have powers to enforce my accusation too strongly against one hemmed in by dignity and station, and surrounded by all those prejudices naturally connected with a reputation for learning. To do an injustice, is not in my power : I am to speak of recent facts and public transactions, under the correction of my fellow-citizens, and in the presence of a learned and liberal profession, which would revolt from injustice even towards the guilty. And “ though a person may be easily misrepresented in regard to a particular action ; it is scarcely possible that he should be so in regard to the general tenor of his conduct.” \*

That Dr James Gregory has traduced my professional and moral reputation, is most true : It is the most trivial perhaps of his offences, that which the public will the most easily par-

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\* Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments.

don, and which I was inclined, from pride and conscious rectitude, to pass in silence. Seven years have elapsed, and more, since he sought to ruin my good name, and concluded a defamatory quarto of five hundred and thirteen pages with this memorable warning to the inhabitants of this my native city,—“ Any man, if himself or his family were sick, should as soon think of calling in a mad dog, as Mr John Bell, or any who held the principles he professes.” My principles, my feelings, my professional talents, and my integrity, may easily find more partial judges than Dr Gregory : If I have made any uncharitable conclusion concerning his, it is one which conveys a compliment to his prudence. He wrote, published, distributed, this memorable and calumnious essay on my poor talents, not merely for the gratification of his own malicious propensities, but for behoof of those who could reward them.

By the patience with which I endured calumnies, which I never wanted spirit or talent to repress, I showed how willing I was that contention should cease, and the profession in this city be restored to a share of public esteem. But this foul attempt against individual reputation,



was only the prelude to universal aggression, and my silence an immunity for past, an invitation to greater offences. Volume after volume has issued from the press, fraught with defamation, ribaldry and obscenity ; and tales and jests, portentous to our much honoured profession, and to the fame of the Medical School.

If ever the doctrine of innate ideas, independent of sensation, and referable to some internal source, could be inferred from the operations of the human intellect, it must be from the writings and the actions of this illustrious person. His feelings have no such vulgar origin as external impressions and natural visible causes ! They come purely from within, in one flood-stream of impetuous resentful passions, uncontrollable in their course, boiling and foaming round every petty obstacle, and sweeping before them all the muddy elements of a disordered imagination.

The writings I speak of have been distributed with a rash profusion, which has made some of their uses quite intelligible to our fellow-citizens. Such writings and such purposes are rare, it must be acknowledged, in the history of a physician's life. This gentleman's volumes are chiefly collections of tales, bon-mots, and jests, fami-

liar only in certain ranks of society, and so mixed with defamation, cunning, and intrigue, that it is hard to say which is the object dearest to his vanity, or nearest his heart; to be esteemed a wit, to degrade his profession, or to defame his rivals. His calumnies are not disseminated in trivial pamphlets, the effervescence of ill-starred moments of passion and spleen, but in ponderous quartos, each the sober deliberate labour of two years.

“The war (says the College of Physicians) which this gentleman has waged for some years against us, and among us, has been carried on by him in a great measure in the dark: His calumnies have been dispersed chiefly among his patients, his dependants, and his friends; and circulated where the College cannot trace nor follow them; though he has hitherto abstained, and seems now to shrink, from any open act of publication, or the promulgation of those voluminous Memorials which he once entitled “DEFENCE and RELATIVE DOCUMENTS,” presented to the College in the year 1808.” \*

While this gentleman thrives by intrigue and

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\*. Vide Narrative of the Conduct of Dr James Gregory, by the Royal College of Physicians.

calumny, every one concerned for the honour of our profession feels for its degraded state, and many suffer more perhaps than it is my privilege to express. When a man of worth and goodness, of the most unoffending and gentle manners, as Dr Duncan is, declares that the calumnies of his fellow Professor “ have, in the short space of three years, done more to disturb his happiness, than all the occurrences of his life,” the public may be assured there is something deeply wrong. This is not the language of rancour or revenge ; it is that plaintive tone which is most natural to an unoffending and gentle nature, and which no one condescends to use without feeling real distress.

Our proud establishments of an Infirmary, a University, and a College of Physicians, are not a little endangered, when a man of this cruel and selfish nature, coolly speculates on their practical uses ! makes the character of the first surgeons of the city the subject of his intrigues ! and does not refrain from the foulest calumnies against those of his fellow Professors, to whom the world ascribes unusual candour, gentleness, and goodness ; against those to whom he himself dare not refuse the title of “ Chief Pil-



lars of our Medical School !”—It is only their honour, worth, and integrity, that the pious Gregory chooses to defame.

But there are consequences of this flagitious conduct more to be deprecated still, than those which bear hard on the feelings of individuals, and the charities of private life. While the fate of our public hospitals, the fame of our medical school, and the morals of our calling, are endangered, our reputation for humanity, decorum, and all the proprieties which are so becoming in men of our profession, are already lost. It is believed, firmly believed, that in this city, to whose inhabitants a reputation for learning and genius, hospitality and urbanity, are so justly ascribed, those of the medical profession are so deficient in politeness, so dead to the common feelings of our nature, as to be unwilling to forego, even for an hour, the indulgence of the most rancorous passions, or of consulting, with good faith and decent manners, for the good of a fellow-creature in extreme distress !

Is this true? Just as true as any other impression the writings or actions of this extraordinary person have left on the public mind. It is, I believe, the universal opinion of the profession

here, and wherever it is practised on liberal and generous principles, that private resentments should give way to the best sympathies of our nature, to the sufferings of a fellow-creature, and the solicitude of his friends.

Yes, in one instance, it is true ! There is one person, to the dishonour of our profession, whose head and heart are distracted with quarrels, even to this degree ! to whom quiet is painful, and peace and calmness annihilation ! to whom the indulgence of the worst passions of hatred and revenge, is a pleasure far surpassing that which acts of beneficence gives to more susceptible or tender natures. “ There is one, who has such a genius for quarrelling with his professional brethren, that without even the PRETENCE of any difference in medical opinion, and purely on account of CERTAIN DIFFERENCES in MORALITY ! he has quarrelled with some of them IRRECONCILEABLY ! and REFUSED EVER AGAIN TO CONSULT WITH THEM.” \*

Those are the moral propensities of this person's nature, illustrated in every page of his writings, by all the atrocities of his libellous quartos,

and all the agonies of his life. His system of defamation, now amounting to EIGHT VOLUMES, has occupied all his faculties during fifteen years of distraction. The catalogue stands thus :

1. A defamatory Pamphlet against his fellow-Professors, Drs Alexander and James Hamilton, father and son: An expensive work, published anno 1794 ; for which he was, upon an action of defamation, amerced in the sum of L.500.

2 A defamatory Memorial, 260 pages quarto, traducing the gentlemen then officiating in the Royal Infirmary, under the insidious and lying title of Younger Surgeons ; for which he was not prosecuted, and therefore was not fined. Published anno 1800.

3. AN ADDITIONAL MEMORIAL, addressed to the said Managers of the Royal Infirmary, anno 1803 : Published three years after that extraordinary revolution was effected, which had been the pretext for the first : Published after his best friends were established in quiet undisputed possession of that charity, after Mr John Bell had retired to private practice : It was, indeed, this very natural change, unforeseen, and unprovided for in the expedition and fire-eyed fury of the

revolution, that entailed this new duty upon the Physician and Pamphleteer of the party. This is the quarto which concludes with the advertisement to the public about “ Mad-Dogs.”

4. An overwhelming deluge of Obscenity, Ribaldry, and unprovoked Scurrility, under the insidious title of CENSORIAN LETTER.—The Author, under the pretext of an obsolete office, that of CENSOR, (meant surely for guarding the College from disgrace abroad, by private remonstrance and admonition,) printed the most groundless calumnies; and, under the pretext of circulating the pamphlet to the members of the Royal College, and, indeed, without the honesty of transmitting it to those who were most foully traduced, he circulated it with cool deliberate malice, among all ranks of our fellow-citizens, and industriously distributed it through all parts of the British empire and of our colonies abroad.

5. A REVIEW of the PROCEEDINGS of the ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS in Edinburgh: “ Revised by counsel,” marked on each copy, so well was the perpetrator aware of his delinquencies, and of his danger; and distributed through all ranks of society; as if the nobility, gentry, tradesmen, and artisans, had controul over the



proceedings and votes in the Council of the Royal College of Physicians, as if they had been sworn in like Dr Gregory, “ never to divulge any thing acted or spoken in any meeting of the said College, or Council, or Court thereof, which might tend to the prejudice or defamation of the same, or any member thereof.” \* Published Anno 1805.

6. DEFENCE BEFORE the Royal College of Physicians: A volume, or rather two volumes, 700 pages quarto; in which the Author, though he had nothing so little at heart as vindicating himself from the unmanly crime of falsehood, lost not the precious occasion of traducing every rival, reviling the whole College of Physicians, and opening anew the sluices of obscenity and scandal.

This was published or distributed partially, but with all the timidity of guilt; and, though entitled a Defence, has never been very confidently obtruded on the world. This Defence, which has lain printed for two years, while the crime of want of veracity is proclaimed loudly against

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\* Oath administered to every Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians,

him by a whole College in the daily papers, is yet thought inadequate by the learned Author to its important purpose and title. It consists of 500 pages of Vindication ; 10, I believe, of Postscript ; 70 of Protest ; and 123 pages of what the Professor is pleased to call *RELATIVE DOCUMENTS* ; which, according to his peculiar vocabulary, and new system of elucidation, means, relative defamation, and irrelevant scandal.

7. *HISTORICAL MEMOIRS of the MEDICAL WAR in Edinburgh in the years 1805, 6, and 7*, by Dr James Gregory. The medical wars of 1805-6, and 7, must, if I am endowed with memory or judgment, be a history of the unprincipled aggressions of Dr James Gregory, against the peace and honour of the Royal College of Physicians, and against the reputation of his rivals. Whether the author continues to labour on this inestimable morceau of history, or is wearied of his work ; whether he is “ to adorn it with a preface, and enrich it with notes,” I know not : We are certain that the book exists. by an infallible token,—that he denies it. The title is all that I have seen of this work. I transcribe that first page of it from the *Annual Medical Review*, and leave the author to dispute with the “ Society of

Physicians in London," whether they were entitled to review what lay open on their table? Whether, in a "Review of the Disputes of the Edinburgh College," a title like this was not a "Relative Document" worth printing? They have shown their moderation and good sense, by regarding it as unworthy of any other comment.

8. A NEW EDITION of the CENSORIAN LETTER, ENRICHED with a PREFACE, and ADORNED with NOTES, by Dr James Gregory. This has been advertised in every newspaper, with the most cruel intentions and most ostentatious insolence. Dr Gregory stands impeached of a whole system of lies,—publicly impeached,—and he should, a year ago, have redeemed his pledge, of taking SHORT, SPEEDY, EFFECTUAL means of refuting the charge. He has, lying by him rotting, what he once called A VINDICATION; he has every motive to rouse him that could be supposed to inspire so bold a tongue in so bad a cause. But still his favourite occupation, the dearest to his heart, is traducing his brethren,—enriching his most contemptible performances with more offensive notes. His defence sleeps.

This day, Dr James Gregory has three of these unedited, scurrilous, nameless quartos in

the press ; and I am persuaded, that, when they are delivered out to the world, it will be seen that he is subject to a disease of fatal tendency, all paroxysm and no crisis—

—————*Exsuperat magis, aegrescitque medendo !*

and it will be proved, that the worst of all incapacities, is an ill regulated mind.

This gentleman has laid claim to all the most honourable distinctions, that worth, learning, and wit, joined to a spirit of the most “ romantic and chivalrous honour,” could confer. If he had been a wit, he might have found room and verge enough, in these everlasting quartos, to display all the gambolings and caperings of drollery, and to amuse those at least who are not fastidious. But he seems to me like one, who tumbles about for the amusement of a mob, and, for his last greatest feat, stands on his head, wagging his heels in the air, quite unconscious that the mob is gone by.

Had he been inspired with truly liberal and generous feelings, he would have found a few to praise his conduct, to love and honour him for his public spirit, and to share his triumph. But a train of unfortunate coincidences have spoiled the effects of his most generous efforts, and his rarest



productions ; for, while he has published these amusing quartos, all about moral causes, he has been visibly occupied in an intrigue in the College of Surgeons, quarrels in the College of Physicians, a revolution in the Royal Infirmary, and open warfare against the reputation of his rivals and fellow professors !

The talents that such works require, the fame they may procure, the condition of one subject to the endless agonies of such an occupation, are no way enviable. The works I have enumerated, are indeed dreadful relative documents, and eloquent facts. What should I say of the unhappy person to whom these letters are addressed, but that he has spent a perturbed and busy life, chiefly in defeating the happy auspices of his birth.

There is but one mistake I should be sorry to be supposed guilty of, the weakness of hoping to reclaim a mind that makes a pastime of the agony of others ! of recalling Dr Gregory, the tyrant of his profession, and its disgrace, to habits of peace, charity, or any kind of goodness. He is launched for ever, and lost, in a boundless ocean of resentments and passions. To call him thence, “ Were,

bootless, as issue precepts to the Leviathan to come on shore."

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For these letters, written in haste, with little of that persuasive power, with few of those attractions, which so just a cause deserves, I offer no apology. I have endeavoured to incite the younger part of my profession to useful and diligent studies, and have taught them to profit by the most flagrant example in modern times, of all that a physician should not do, who wishes to be an honour to his profession.

To Dr Gregory, I have but one word to say : He has one peculiar infirmity of mind, which if it related to fears and distractions about bodily health, we should call hypochondricism ; but which, relating to the affairs of life, takes another and more alarming name. He ever finds, in the most simple and ingenuous proceedings, causes of suspicion : He dreams for ever of plots, conspiracies, and deep and secret designs ! takes an insane pleasure in reviling the imaginary authors, and makes those imaginary discoveries the pretext for endless calumnies against inno-

cent men. I hereby protest and declare, that no physician, surgeon, nor private friend, has known of my intentions, or is responsible for my errors of temper, or of judgment. This gentleman's cruel ingenuity has here no scope ; his malignity but a limited subject : Yet no subject is unworthy of his vengeful spirit.—

*Me, me (adsum qui feci) in me convertite ferrum.*



## LETTER I.

Displaying the unworthy occupations, and unmanly jealousies, of one who, from his rank and station in life, might have been the Ornament of his Profession, and a Protector of Merit.

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SHOULD you, when this volume is laid upon your table, feel emotions of resentment or disdain, remember, for how many years you have laid siege to my reputation, and battered at my peace; till at last, a system of defamation and of universal aggression, has brought your conduct before that tribunal, where it would appear I am, by a singular fatality, destined always to stand forth your public accuser.

Though an early and devoted victim of those malignant passions which you divulge with so little delicacy, with such airs of triumph to all the world, I claim no bad privileges from your example: I sincerely wish it were possible to preserve that calm and dignified manner, that decorous language, that moderate tone of feeling, which best suits the occasion: But, I have to repel unheard of insolence, and to represent those moral principles, by which the honour of our profession may still be main-

tained ; should I grow warm in such a cause, I hope the fervour I may occasionally give way to, will give a glow only to truth. One consolation I must surely feel, that I am not wounding the peace of a good, nor the reputation of an innocent man : peace and innocence you have for ever dismissed from your mind ; the blessing and inward consciousness of an unoffending life, you never can regain.

Can you attribute the remonstrances and the accusations now preparing against you, accusations which all your metaphysic skill will not enable you to elude, to personal resentment ? Can you lay your hand upon your heart, and truly acquit yourself of persevering malice against numbers who have not had a thought that should offend you ; unless virtuous and modest manners, charitable occupations, and an unoffending life, seem hateful to you ? Has your reputation or peace of mind been invaded, your progress opposed, your spirits roused to the honourable contest of self-defence, by the malice of any rival ? Never ! Your life has been one continued scene of unprovoked aggression ; and your whole conduct at variance with the established morals of our profession, and hostile to the reputation, feelings, and interests, of your brethren. For love of grace, lay not this flattering unction to your soul, that not your trespass but my malice speaks : You have spared no reputation which seemed opposed to yours : You have respected no man's feelings, on account of his gentleness or goodness : Under an air of indifference to professional animosities, you have treasured up tales of defamation, and, under the



mask of rude and boisterous merriment, have inflicted the most deadly wounds. "There is a public mischief in your mirth." You have driven your profession to the utmost limits of endurance, and laid the foundations of a more dignified resentment than any that can arise from personal hatred or revenge.

Attracted by that singular scene of contention in which you have involved the medical world, and invited at an early period, by the younger members of my profession, to repress your insolence, I have long observed you "even with the very comment of my soul:" but could you know with how impartial a spirit, far from judging harshly of my sentiments, you would turn back with doubt and regret, to question your own. I am in no degree the natural enemy of your reputation, nor rival of your practice; and should with greater pleasure have seen Dr Gregory receiving the just homage of the learned and good, than, as his most partial friends must now confess him to be, the traducer of his brethren, and certainly not the first in the cultivation of science. "Some are of opinion, (says Necker) that man has received from nature a secret propensity to all that is good and virtuous\*." If, as you boast, you are "made of the same stuff, and cast in the same mold as other men are †," and have inherited any share of this secret propensity of nature towards all that is virtuous, it must be an enquiry of no slight interest

\* On Religious Opinions.

† First scurrilous Memorial by Dr Gregory. *Vide* footnote to page 8. of these Letters.

to all of us, to all whose feelings, or interests, or reputations, lie exposed to your tyrannical and turbulent humour, by what acts of self-indulgence you have so corrupted this good and virtuous nature, as to view all your brethren with rancour, the sufferings of your fellow-creatures with levity, and that profession, of which you are a sworn and salaried defender, with contempt? How you have indulged a vanity so extravagant, as to believe that you are, not by generous and useful studies, but by nature, superior to all others? How you have presumed to traduce, without distinction, numbers born your equals, and who, by undeviatingly treading in the paths of diligence and virtue, have attained a reputation which you are reduced to the sad necessity of affecting to despise?

That you “are made of the same stuff, and cast in the same mould, as other men are\*,” is I fear a self-flattery. You should have written “made of rude materials, in a rougher mould!” but if it really be so, you do yourself no more than justice in publicly claiming those commendations which others would hardly think of bestowing on a transient glance: But

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\* It is a most extraordinary PROCLAMATION of Dr Gregory's that is here transiently noticed. Had any gentleman blundered upon some vain or rash expression, I should have thought it a species of felony to punish him for an accidental error; but these remarkable expressions are taken from a LONG, LABORIOUS, DELIBERATE CHARACTER OF HIMSELF, for the discussion of which I do him the justice thus to prepare my readers. It is quoted entire in foot-note to page 8.



let that pass: It is not the form nor the stuff of which you are composed, that will long occupy the attention of the world, but your morals, and your actions, and their influence on the fate of your profession, and on the interests and happiness of others. Pardon me, Sir, if I say, that I find in your writings neither dignity, nor elegance, nor persuasion; no token of good affections inherited by nature, nor of gracious doctrines imbibed from philosophy; neither a knowledge of man, nor a command over the passions; but a blundering headlong rage, founded in deep rancour, and indulged in language ill suiting with your profession or your rank in society. Abandoning the pursuits of science, and triumphing in the violation of every propriety and decency, you have addressed yourself to the task of defamation, with a fervour of malice, which outruns the power of reason: You have driven headlong among the ranks of your profession, accusing the younger surgeons of want of modesty, skill, or humanity! The college of physicians, of want of virtue or probity! And all your competitors of want of faith, or honour! You have, to the delight of the credulous and unjudging mob, stripped off from your professional rivals their mask of secrecy and hypocrisy, and turning them out into the world, bare and naked of all those charities, in which they affected to clothe themselves as with raiment, leaving them no moral virtue under heaven, but those of patience and meekness.

It is impossible to witness the strange occupations of your manhood, the mutinous and jealous passions

which entirely occupy your mind, without reflecting on the happier auspices of your early life. You were not left alone in the world, unguarded and unprotected in the first arduous struggles : The hardships of poverty, the uncertainty of success, the want of means, either of acquiring or displaying talents, never oppressed your mind ; no opposition ruffled, no disappointments enflamed your passions : You had a Father, a wise and good one, to superintend your studies ; and a place of honour prepared for you, and ensured by claims which, in this country, have never lost their influence ! No man, though of the most resplendent genius, and highest accomplishments, could ever come in competition with one born as you were, to academic honours, and a hereditary station. You have taken too little thought of this, how much you owed to fortune in that early elevation, which you have the confidence to boast of, as if every step had been won by fair and open competition.

Surely these are circumstances suited to produce a generous, forgiving, and grateful state of mind ; a dignified contempt of petty quarrels, a liberal and gentle disposition towards all your profession, especially its younger unprotected members : Your whole soul should have been devoted to your public duties, and all your hours saved from the folly of contention, and the meanness of trade. Have you lived this peaceful and honoured life ? Have you emulated the simple, retiring, and modest manners, so becoming in a physician ? Have you studied the precepts, or followed the example, of your Father ?

Dreadful questions, which your conduct, and not your protestations, must answer.

Never was there a scene of such tumult, and worthless disorder, as that which you have created around you: The most needy, selfish man, struggling through poverty and adversity, the most vindictive and jealous, striving through professional animosities, could not have assumed a more infuriated conduct than you have, in the most propitious circumstances, amidst kind indulgent friends. How easy should it have been for a modest man, with but moderate talents, to have attained a high reputation, whose slightest acquirements were set off by circumstance and station; whose early, imperfect indications of genius, were sure to be praised; whose every virtue, real or fictitious, all men were prepared to applaud?—That you should have escaped acquiring a high name for professional learning, and for the professional virtues of liberality, charity, and goodness, is one of the singularities of your destiny: You have indeed passed a busy life, but it has been chiefly spent, in successful efforts to defeat the happy privileges of your birth.

From your writings no man will be apt to draw any suspicion of your excellence in medicine, much less of your wit, integrity, honour, or delicacy; though he will find that you confidently believe you possess them all. A spirit of defamation seems to be your vital principle, to which all your general propensities, and natural actions may be referred: Your every separate and peculiar power, as a scholar, a moralist, a metaphysician, seems curiously in-

verted, so as to increase and support this inherent quality of your nature :

“ ——— Tibi nomina mille  
Mille nocendi artes ; ” ———

The conclusion of the line I have no occasion to repeat, “ *fecundam concute pectus*,” is a council you never need ; without any peculiar excitement, you are at all times prepared to pour forth the per’lous stuff, with which your breast is filled : \* You have joined the trade of murdering reputations, with your ordinary occupations in a professional way, which, with many misinformed persons, has been matter

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\* “ Who is this DRAWCANSIR OF MEDICAL LITERATURE,  
“ who sets ALL HIS PROFESSIONAL BRETHREN AT DEFIANCE,  
“ and treats their opinions, AND CONTROVERSIES, AND OBSER-  
“ VATIONS, WITH SUCH CONTEMPTUOUS FREEDOM ? Is he an  
“ empiric or a dogmatist ? What are his dogmas ? The ques-  
“ tions are very pertinent, and may be easily answered. *He*  
“ *is one who now lives a sad outcast from all parties*, just like  
“ a man excommunicated as an Atheist by a congregation of  
“ Fanatics, and expelled as a Fanatic by a Royal Academy of  
“ Atheists ! He is made of the *same stuff*, and put together  
“ in the *same manner* as other men ! and of course in all proba-  
“ bility is neither wiser nor better than they are. Far from be-  
“ ing more *placid and tractable*, he is *more irascible and ob-*  
“ *stinate than most men* ! and if he had ever engaged in medical  
“ disputes, would probably have been as *violent*, as *absurd*, as  
“ *implacable*, and as *ridiculous*, as any of his predecessors or  
“ cotemporaries ! He has *such a genius for quarrelling* with  
“ his professional brethren ! that, without even the *pretence* of  
“ any difference in medical opinions, and purely on account of  
“ certain differences in MORALITY, *he has quarrelled with some*  
“ of



of surprise : But, paradoxical as it may appear, I think I shall be able to prove, that, before you had evinced those talents for slaughtering reputation, your best friends were indifferent to your interests, and you had few opportunities of doing any other kind of harm ; that without a competent skill in this more odious species of murder, your opportunities of officiating in that which is gainful, would have continued extremely limited.

You court enmity, that you may practise calumny, and of such a person as I am, you say, in the pride of your heart, “ Am I dog, that you are come forth against me, to beat me with staves ? ” I am, Sir, the faithful servant of my profession, in whose sacred cause, I defy you, the illiberal calumnious accuser of every man of honour and principle in the city.—Is it to be believed, that the medical world is thus disturbed, by the virtuous abhorrence of Dr Gregory, the pure and immaculate, from the prac-

“ of them irreconcilably, and refused ever again to consult  
 “ with them ; first telling them, in the plainest possible terms, the  
 “ reasons of that unalterable resolution ; just to prevent any mis-  
 “ understanding, or the repetition of such scenes as we read of  
 “ in Gil Blas. He knows accordingly that some of his profes-  
 “ sional brethren would be very glad to see him hanged,” &c.  
*Vide* Dr JAMES GREGORY'S *Character of himself, Infirmary Memorial*, 4to, p. 222. of the gratis copy ; viz. the quarto copy, which he perseveres to this day in distributing to all who will accept it, with the strange delusion that it is extremely witty,—

“ Plays o'er his tricks like Esop's ass,  
 A gratis fool to all that pass.”

tices of his ungenerous and unworthy colleagues? from the politics and sordid maxims of the Ruthersfords, and Monros, and Homes, and Hamiltons; the Spences, and Stewarts, and Duncans, and Hopes, of our College?—What is it that offends you?—Are any of these gentlemen notoriously leagued with practising surgeons, or with one another? Are their friendships formed on any other principles than those of sympathy, respect, and mutual esteem? Are they of the number of those unprincipled beings, whose failings stoop to their interests most courteously; accustomed, “*aliud elausum in pectore, aliud in lingua promptum habere; amicitias, inimicitiasque non ex re, sed ex commodo æstumare*”?—Are these busy, restless, intriguing men, clamorous for practice, or indelicate in their ways of attaining it? Are they envious calumniators and declainers against their profession, and against their brethren? Have they neglected to write or to publish works of science; have they distributed volumes of calumny, gratis, to all the world? They seem to me and to others, modest, studious, retiring men, of dignified conduct, and inoffensive lives: What is it, Sir, that offends you?—If it has been your purpose to persuade the world, that among the modest, unassuming members of our Royal College, you alone are the man of integrity, worth, and honour! That you alone are distinguished for physical and medical science, skillful from study, and deliberate and sagacious in practice! You have undertaken a most hopeless project; an enterprise, which, though committed to the greatest genius in panegyric and calumny the



world ever saw, must have brought nothing but disappointment ! But, attempted by the “ drawcansir of medical literature,” whose best pretensions are contempt of science, a braving of the opinion of the wise and experienced, the “ setting all his professional brethren at defiance, and treating their opinions and observations with scorn !”—it must appear quite ridiculous. What has the drawcansir of literature to expect in return ? Contempt and scorn ; and he must ever lie under the suspicion, that his contempt of science arises from *ignorance* of its best resources, his confidence from folly.—Beware, Sir, of incurring that contempt with which you threaten your brethren : “ Contempt is a kind of gangrene, which, if it seize one part of a character, corrupts all the rest by degrees. \*”

“ ————— vix credere possis,  
Quam sibi non sit amicus.”

Along with the sacred duty of calumny, you have thought fit to join another very useful, though I cannot perceive that you have made it a very sacred duty, the duty of charity ! You found it commended in the words of Scripture as a cloak to cover a multitude of sins ; perhaps you have found it useful : The sickly sentimental charity of modern times, stretches itself from the north unto the south, and from the east even unto the west, but always to-

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\* This is the sound and sagacious reflection of Samuel Johnson, in his life of Sir Richard Blackmore, who might have been A GREAT PHYSICIAN, but he had unfortunately resolved to be A GREAT WIT.

wards objects beyond its reach or ken, and yours is of this nature: you were taught your charity in that school, where you first learnt the wise and politic distinction betwixt older and younger surgeons! Then you began to feel how profitable it might be for a physician to declaim upon the incapacity of surgeons: Then it was that you became an enthusiast in our profession (of surgery,) though you had never been so in your own: Then you became miserable, oh! most miserable, about the sufferings of the poor in the hospital, and lamented the incapacity of the gentlemen whom you were taught to traduce under the title of young surgeons. In short, Sir, you were distracted about sufferings you had never witnessed; traduced operators who were altogether unknown to you; railed about charities, which, I fear, you had never practised; and affected a whole system of feelings foreign to your nature. Your sensibilities had been roused, and your whole soul filled with “the tender-looking charity intent on gentle deeds.”

Your charities! Your confidence does amuse me. I defy your most partial friend to prove, that there is that faulty tenderness in your nature, to involve you, “for the orphan’s and the stranger’s cause,” in enmity, in warfare with all the world: I defy your most partial friend to put his finger upon one page or paragraph in all your voluminous writings, which might be supposed to denote humane or tender feelings, or any thing but rancour and bitterness of heart, a cruel indifference, not only to the sufferings of the poor, but to the acute and honest feelings of men, well born as yourself, and truly humane; men personal-

ly known to you by upright intentions, and good affections.

Charity towards the poor, should imply many pleasing and gentle feelings, a warm heart, and liberal temper, and kind affections: Your harsh intolerant temper breaks out not only in public struggles, unprovoked, but even in those scenes of private life, where delicacy and feeling are so precious: You could not address in gentle or encouraging terms, the enthusiastic Burns. "The noblest blood in all the land is abashed, having no lackey but pale poverty;" but his poverty and his genius roused none of your sensibilities; the ingratitude of his country remains an indelible reproach; his sense of your hospitalities he has expressed in very memorable words, "That Gregory may be a very good man, but he excruciates me."\*

Your charities! Your sensibilities! Yes, Sir, we have indeed floods of charity, and floods of scurrility! Your ravings are charity: Your calumnies are pure charity: Your sensibilities were roused, and it was most natural that the outcry should be impatient, irrepressible; for all your charities were connected with substantial interests, and "ended, where those of more selfish ones are said to begin, at home."

The extent of your calumnies, now matured into a system, is not unknown to the world; but, in your purpose lies the mystery: Philosopher though you be, it will be difficult to name one of all your angry debates about moral excellence, and moral precepts,

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\* Letters to Mr George Thomson.

without its direct practical use. If the College of Physicians have not discovered more of policy and consistency in your most extravagant actions, than of honour and truth in your most deliberate affirmations, I shall subscribe myself, what you are more than suspected to be, a wilful perjurer, and deliberate violator of truth. Was it merely for vain and ostentatious purposes, that volume after volume was published, at a ruinous expence, reviling the profession, and defaming all its more distinguished members? Was it for trivial purposes, that these calumnious quartos, in which you traduced every respectable character in the city, were distributed gratis, palmed upon every family in this city under some sly pretext, and thrust officiously into every post-chaise, to accompany dreaming and hypochondriacal patients, to places of public resort? Was it without a consciousness of having done this unmanly wrong to the reputation of unoffending men, that you wrote with your own pernicious hand, on the boards of each defamatory volume, "REVISED BY COUNSEL?" Or did rank cowardice and the recollection of former chastisement\*, teach you the art, how to cool down your calumny below the actionable point, and sail, "just to the windward of the law?" Could it be for slight or trivial purposes, that

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\* This gentleman's coup d'essay in the art of murdering reputation, was made on Dr James Hamilton junior, Hereditary Professor of Midwifery, an experiment generally esteemed unsuccessful, and for which he was amerced by the Consistorial Court for defamation, in a sum of money.

a Physician and a Professor exposed himself intriguing in a College of Surgeons, and quarrelling in a College of Physicians? No, no; in the one he had to gain friends, in the other to calumniate rivals; in both, to subdue upstart talents, and prevent competition.

It is not possible long to prosecute arts like these without detection. During ten years we have endured in silence, while you have been unremittingly employed instilling poison into the public mind, vending your “drugs of noxious potency.” Are these the best contents of a physician’s closet? Is it thus you labour for the improvement of science, “and with your prison hours enrich the world?” Believe me, Sir, it was but an ungentleman-like occupation, to be seen on the threshold of your house, at those times, too, when the most anxious and Christian duties should have filled your mind, thrusting calumnious volumes into your patients hands, volumes compared with which the hand-bill of a quack is an innocent uninvidious experiment on the credulity of the public, to which his poverty, and not his will, consents.

You have not left us in doubt, what kind of policy you would pursue, were your malice backed with proportioned talents, or sufficient power; for the dull and worthless, the cunning and the covetous, become your natural connections, and your particular care: The rest you would dispose of like the tyrant of old, who, in order to intimate figuratively to his courtiers, how the interests of his state were to be maintained, stalked through a field of



standing corn, and smote off every ear that reared itself above the common level.

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“ In the race for wealth, honour, and preferment, a man may run as hard as he can, and strain every nerve and every muscle, in order to outstrip all his competitors ; but if he should jostle, or throw down any of them, the indulgence of the spectators is at an end ; it is a violation of fair-play, which they cannot admit of.” Have you considered the import of this moral doctrine, or whose stamp and authority it bears ? \* Have you never perceived that your jests, your tales and your insinuations, and all that you exult in as witty and amusing, might be in fact, sound practical villainy ? You may perhaps come to feel, that jests may undermine a reputation, and repent of arts which admit of no competition.

Though not inaccessible, I hope, to generous and forgiving sentiments, I am sensible of no merit in longer enduring this persecution ; nor can I reflect without abhorrence on your politics and scheme of life. These emotions I know no more than you do how to disguise, but shall express all that a man may be allowed to feel, who sees the forms of professional education, and the road to eminence changed, and the rewards due to skill and learning usurped by those who never loved nor studied the science ; who has

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\* Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiment, p. 207.



suffered, and continues to suffer, with the most respectable of his profession, under unrelenting calumny.

When a Physician and Professor, a man of reputed learning, who, if his base interests would allow him, has a character to maintain, ventures to publish such actionable libels \*, what will not the retainers of his party insinuate in whisperings, which it would be a baseness, almost equal to theirs, either to trace or to refute? I have for ten years endured this abuse, hoping, but in vain, that even the bitterest resentment might be gratified and subside, and the profession be restored to peace: But when will Dr Gregory proclaim that truce which proceeds from exhausted passion; or exclaim

“ ————— credo mea numina tandem

“ Fessa jacent, odiis aut exsaturata quievi !”

I have merit in a forbearance founded neither in guilt nor fear; for I have never wanted the sensibility to feel these indignities, nor the power to repress them: But now I mean to enquire into your pretensions; to question your principles; to deny you (and I am sorry to use so rude a language,) the common feelings of honour, probity,

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\* This worthy gentleman, so tender of the poor, so liberal in all his ways, writes quite undisguisedly, point blank to his purpose. He uses, to be sure, a world of unmeaning phrases, before he does come to explain his purpose; “for there is not a man in all Venice that speaks such a world of nothings as this Gratiano.” But, the plain conclusion to a desultory memorial of 513 pages 4to, is in these words: “Any man in his senses, if himself or his family were sick, WOULD AS SOON THINK OF CALLING IN A MAD-

or veracity ; and utterly to deny those tender susceptibilities for the sufferings of the poor, by which you first attracted the attention of the public, and varnished over your own mean design. This I shall do, Sir, with deliberation and calmness, with honesty and courage ; for I am sensible that I provoke those who are no mean proficient in private whisperings, or in open calumny.

I stand forth from the ranks of my profession, neither an aggressor nor a calumniator, but to repel calumny, and to repress aggressions hitherto unheard of : It would be, indeed, a lost profession, were its members insensible or indifferent to those violations of decency which must lessen its value in society, and alter the relative station of every individual. It is my purpose, Sir, to show the base motives from which your enmities arise : Conspicuous examples are rare and precious ; and yours, and the lesson it affords, shall not be lost to the world by any negligence of mine : I hope “ to deliver it down to posterity, as a negative lesson of every moral virtue.”

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DOG ! into his house, as a practitioner who held the principles which they (viz. Mr John Bell, &c.) have so strongly avowed. CERTAINLY NO SUCH PRACTITIONER OUGHT TO BE, *or ever would be employed, when one of different principles could be found !*” This is indeed elegant, perspicuous, plain, and entirely PRACTICAL. Good God ! will it be believed in other cities, or in future times, that a Professor of the Practice of Physic in the celebrated University of Edinburgh, had expressed such sentiments in such language. That this were the scope of all his politics ; and the very stuff of which all his medical works were composed. That these were the plain simple words, with the *practical inference* with which he concluded a volume of 513 pages, addressed to the citizens of Edinburgh, and distributed gratis !!!

The more I reflect upon your life and actions, the less reluctance do I feel in entering upon this needful, though most ungracious task. Inured to every kind of indelicacy, and unused to salutary restraints; inflated too with a vain conceit of acquirements, at once pedantic, and inapplicable to the ordinary affairs of life, you are incapable of comparing yourself justly with others, or conceiving moderate resentments, mixed with manly contempt of the injuries, or supposed injustice, of the world. You give way to every gust of passion, and, with extravagant and crazy notions of your own superiority, betake yourself to such means of maintaining it, as cannot but produce the most ludicrous effects. Your medical talents you proclaim, by avowed contempt of that professional learning, from which only, and not from inspiration, or native genius, all useful talents must be derived: Your liberality and charity you prove by traducing your brethren; You assert your veracity with oaths and menaces, and maintain your dignity with wild vociferations, and the airs of a bedlamite. By a thousand violations of all decorum, you have deprived yourself of that respect which your rank and station should have insured to you; and in the madness and violence of your attack, you have exposed your entire body defenceless: Your insolencies resemble those of an intoxicated bully amidst peaceful citizens, who are amused with the extravagance of his imprecations, and are beyond the reach of his disorderly blows; they look upon him with derision, and he owes his safety to contempt.

Some men are seen to blunder onwards through

life, without seeming design; others to cultivate their interests by devices, calculated to divert the public attention from their real aim, as rowers pull one way and look another: but, it would be amusing to discover, what the secret thoughts were of a physician, who sought to establish his reputation for diligence and humanity, by quarrels, idle and unprofitable at the best; and for goodness and honour, by publishing volumes of calumny, exceeding in number and size, the professional works of Van Swieten, and Morgagni! Such volumes yours are: Volumes of stale jokes, and pilfered wit,

“ Telling some truths, but dash’d and brew’d with lies,  
To please the fools, and puzzle all the wise \*”

These are the only publications of our Professor of Medicine; but however obnoxious or displeasing they may be to his envious brethren, it would be bold indeed, to deny, that they are eminently calculated to promote practice!

“ To promote practice?” Yes, thrice worthy Professor, it was my word. What some aim at by gravity and learning, you try to accomplish by ways more suitable to your own talents, and the temper of the times. Though your words and actions, too, seem wild and whirling, there is method in your madness: your volumes seem, at first sight, but puerile collections of obscene jests, and irrelevant tales; but you have the art to conceal under a mask of

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\* Absalom and Achitophel.



unrestrained merriment, a profound and working malice, ever undermining some good man's reputation, and working forward to some selfish design. Your vociferous rudeness is as much under governance, as the "courtiers glib and oily art." I never open any of your volumes, nor read a low unmannerly jest, without thinking within myself,

" ————— This is some fellow,

" Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect

" A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb

" Quite from its nature : He cannot flatter, he !

" An honest man and plain ;—he must speak truth :

" An they will take it so ;— if not, he's plain.—

" These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness,

" Harbour more craft, and more corrupter ends,

" Than twenty silly ducking observants."

You have, indeed, affected singularity most successfully. It seldom happens in polished society, or in modern times, and never, as far as I have known, in a profession learned and respectable as ours, that there starts up so staring and wild a caricature, to challenge wonder and curiosity : I hope, Sir, you will not be offended, that a philosopher of your own tribe, but of a different faith, endeavours, by impartial inquiries, to satisfy his own curiosity, and allay the wonder of others. Unhappily for your individual reputation, the public wonder may be quite misplaced. Numbers, for example, express the utmost astonishment at the many and various extravagancies which you delight in : I, on the contrary, never cease admiring the deliberate wisdom of all your measures ! how well you understand the

weakness of the world, while you seem one of its most indifferent and careless observers! It is the sagacity of your natural instincts, the happy choice and conduct of your trading alliances, and the admirable uses you make of your talents for detraction, that I mean to celebrate. I consider the volumes you have been occupied in publishing for twelve years, not as volumes of passionate, low scurrility, but as solid systems of sound politics, and medical economics; and these letters will, I trust, be received as essays, illustrating this new and ingenious system of Medical Morals and Medical Police, composed by Dr James Gregory, for the purpose of promoting education, and encouraging talents, and calculated for the meridian of Edinburgh.

In these letters or essays I shall be at some pains to illustrate your new system of morals: your opinions concerning talents and education: your practices in respect to copartneries, infirmaries, operations, and private practice. All your opinions are precious: hundreds will now rejoice to find, in the highest ranks of their profession, a precedent for those artifices, which they had not the spirit to invent, or, at least, had not the boldness to practise; and I flatter myself that my comments will be found useful to very many, who have no access to your doctrines, and cannot share with us of this city, the benefit of your example.

Do not despair! I myself, for example, may have a surly, unaccommodating way of thinking, in regard to some of those arts by which you have sought to support yourself; but I shall



most impartially explain them all; and there must be numbers in other cities, inwardly repining at the obscurity of their situations, numbers of unindustrious, ambitious men, who have abandoned all habits of study, and yet retained hopes of rising at once to that station in practice, which you alone have found out a sure and rational method of attaining. “Do not despair!” Pamphlets may come to be held in higher estimation than books; and blasphemy, scurrility, and indelicacy, be esteemed seemly accomplishments in a physician! metaphysics may be mistaken for morality, raving for genius, and languages for learning! and those ponderous volumes of yours, seven in number, the labours of twelve or fourteen distracted years; these volumes which display so impartially the failings and immoralities of your brethren, may become the scriptures of medical men! Science, with its mysteries and mummeries, may decay, while trade improves, and copartneries flourish! Then the improving morals of the profession will give a new colour to your illustrious character, and we shall learn from you to be liberal, generous, and happy!

“ ————— felicia tempora quæ te

“ Moribus opponunt.”

But while you have been studying how to improve the morals of our profession, and to correct the manners and sentiments of your brethren in the Royal College of Physicians, you have indulged in feelings no way propitious to the excellent duty you had taken upon you, and have displayed a temper and state of mind difficult to be described, “Men (says Shaftes-

bury) of the gentlest dispositions, have at some time or other been sufficiently acquainted with those disturbances, which at ill hours small occasions are apt to raise : From these slender experiences of harshness and ill humour, they fully know, and will confess, the ill moments which are past, when the temper is ever so little galled and fretted ; how must it fare then with those who hardly ever know any better hours in life, and who, for the greater part of it, are actuated with a thorough active spleen, a close and settled malignity and rancour ? How great the agonies of a working antipathy, against the multiplied objects of offence ? Nor can it be wondered at, if, to a person thus agitated and oppressed, it seems a high delight to appease and allay, for a while, those furious and rough emotions, by an indulgence of their passions in mischief and revenge."

A more pitiable condition cannot be imagined, than these " agonies of a working antipathy against the multiplied objects of offence."—" Those furious and rough emotions, which can be assuaged only by the frequent indulgence in mischief and revenge." Recollect, Sir, that period in which you should have matured, by severe study, your talents for practice, and cultivated those accomplishments, and taken upon you that gentle deportment, which might have given a grace to your deeper acquirements, and signified to the world, that your station and your talents were equally unquestionable ; that your conduct was founded on deliberate self-esteem ; that you thought professional quarrels unworthy of your rank, and unnecessary to your fame ; and that you were past the striving and doubtful period of your life.

Then, even at that eventful period, when your dignity as a Physician and a Professor, called for every observance: When the medical world began to look up to you for those talents which your education was so well calculated to produce, you lost your way to those promised honours,—to that respect and happiness, which seemed to await you. Then your career of calumny began, and you ventured to defame, in your writings, those whom you could not but honour in your heart. Your medical studies were finished, or, at least, ended: your era of philosophical splendour was just begun: You had published a book, or a pamphlet, on metaphysics; and, having proclaimed to the world, that your doctrines were to be in future esteemed the sole test of ability or veracity,\* you insulted every philosopher of every age and sect, from Priestly to Paley, and, confiding in your own superior soul, cast from you all fellowship with ordinary genius, discarded from your mind all the relative duties of life, and said, with more than philosophical,—more than pharisaical pride, “Who is my equal? Who is my neighbour?” Nothing seemed fit to connect you any longer with your own profession, but contempt and hatred; and these you so openly indulged, as to display uncon-

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\* See this extraordinary proposal, viz. “That an acquiescence in the reasonings and opinions of Dr Gregory shall be the sole and decisive test of ability and veracity, maintained and enforced by very extraordinary arguments and examples.”—*Second Memorial by Dr Gregory*, p. 92, &c.

sciously the motives of your conduct, and the inmost recesses of your heart.

If you have those inward struggles against your bad passions, which even the worst men are supposed to feel, they are quite unavailing; the emotions of revenge and jealousy are always triumphant, and the irritations of the moment always indulged: It is no single reputation that can gratify your malice, occasional effusion of spleen, mixed with what you no imagine wit, that can satisfy your vanity: You conjure up “infernal fiends, if any fiends there are more fell than hate, ambition, and revenge, to centre in your bosom;” \* and are, by an unhappy destiny, doomed to pass your life in the agonies of a peculiar distraction, which all your unrestrained effusions are unable to assuage. Believe me, Sir, when, from my poor and individual reputation, you hastened onwards to trample on every decency and propriety, and to assail with your calumnies every individual distinguished by conduct and talents unlike your own, you exhibited a spectacle, which no one can witness without a degree of wonder and compassion.

But compassion, though it is, I trust, no unfrequent complexion of my mind, is not the medium through which I can consent to view a conduct like yours. Those merit pity who show pity:—The passionate, who have been enkindled to some momentary rashness; the timid, who have been deterred from

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\* “Luctificam Allecto dirarum ab sede sororum

“Infernisque ciet tenebris, cui tristia bella,

“Iraque, insidiæque, et crimina noxia cordi.”

some arduous duty; the simple, who have been deceived into some action inconsistent with honour and truth! But, to the unwearied traducer of every private reputation, and every professional excellence; the envious reprover of our morals, the selfish disturber of the peace of society, what delicacy do we owe? Can we feel respect for a physician who has sought reputation by abstruse sciences which we affect not, and courted public favour by arts which we dare not practise? He who has never relented, no man need scruple to accuse; and, though he could foresee his fate, and send out messengers of peace, we might well say, "What hast thou to do with peace? Get thee behind me."

But it is not all malignity that appears in your public conduct, much of it is blundering and folly. You have an innate want of delicacy, of a most anomalous nature: In your haste to express contempt for your profession, you say, unconsciously, things the most indelicate and most degrading of yourself. You have expatiated, with coarse delight, on the witty, the very witty expedient, of "being in your own illustrious person joined in partnership with Mr Trotter the undertaker \*!" You forget, Sir, that Mr

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\* Vide *Censorian Letter*—a scandalous libel against the Royal College of Physicians, not sold, but distributed gratis, and most providently deposited, (under the pretext of a present,) on the table of many a family in this city; and many a man of candour and worth is seduced to read a libel, which lies upon his table to this hour unrefuted.



Trotter is a very honest man : you were dreaming, I doubt not, when you blundered on his name of co-partneries more practicable and more profitable ; of associates well qualified to bear the burden you would lay on him ; but, with the address of a juggler, you called off the attention of the public from your more useful partners, and substituted that one solemn sable figure, to a troop of very busy ones ! Go to, Sir ; you have enough of partners ; and while you are so surrounded, leave Mr Trotter alone ; in charity spare him to his fellow-citizens, who must need his offices.

I can easily imagine how the freedom and gaiety inspired by company, might incline a man, even of the most dignified mind, to relish, or at least to endure, expressions like these. But how a Physician and a Professor should, with all possible deliberation, select from jest-books such tales as might the most effectually degrade the profession ; that profession, which, if ever he has passed one serious moment, must have been the subject of his anxious thoughts, is difficult to conceive. “ It is but a sorry trick (says Sterne) when fortune, in one of her merry moods, takes a poor devil with this passion of vanity in his head, and mounts him up as high as she can set him ; for it is sure to make him play such fantastic tricks, as to make him become the very fool of the comedy.”

It is not in your nature to be displeased with any public address, which offers you occasion for reply : Vain of any thing like celebrity, you care not for what you are distinguished : The moderate approbation of the judicious and learned, you are ready at all times to abandon for praise : “ Praise from



the smutched artificer; praise from the shrivelled lips of toothless, bald decrepitude:" And praise you have earned, sufficient to disorder your imagination, though it is such as would have given little pleasure to men of sterner virtues. The most desirable of all rewards, the approbation of your profession, is little necessary to your happiness: You have made up your mind, you proceed in your enmities, rejoice in opportunities of insolence, and applaud yourself: In your distracted imagination, every scene of contention is a scene of triumph; but, alas! your friends, if any friends remain, must feel, that even triumphant contention, and successful calumny, is a scene of disgrace.

Accustomed as you are to solemn asseverations, on slight occasions you will not be apt to believe me when I assure you, in truth and simplicity, that your enmity never alarmed me, that your wit or malice never gave me pain. Things malignant in nature, are providentially allied with something calculated to qualify or counteract their influence: Your natural connections explained your enmity; your awkward conceptions of wit and humour disarmed your malice; while your increasing jealousies, and that conflict of passions which has so disordered your mind, has connected me in what you alone will construe as a misfortune, with every professional man of virtue or talents in the city. To your personal malice, and tales of malignity, though published in a magnificent quarto, in the year 1805, circulated gratis, and distributed most industriously for these some years, I have thought unworthy of

reply. I was conscious that, in attempting to defame me, you were but busy in your natural vocation, and fulfilling your duty to the best of friends. Had your malice been sated with the slandering of one innocent person, you might have been allowed to enjoy your triumph.

Though it is true, that your life has been one continued ferment of the most dissocial passions, you labour under this strange delusion, that of the obloquy which must attend your name, no part arises from your own misconduct. But when that conduct, no longer praised by the low and giddy rabble, to whom all your libels are addressed, comes after a series of offences to be explained to the world, you will not find it easy to persuade men of real honour and discrimination, that the worst inferences from your public and notorious actions, are but emotions of envy and revenge! These I protest are not among my motives: I seek not to be revenged by disturbing your feelings; there you are invulnerable! or you have at least a sovereign cure for every wound, "the balm of your own approbation." No truly: Though I mean to expose your practices to the world, I have no cruel designs against your moral delicacies and sensibilities; or, if I had, my labour and my vengeance would be as wild as that of Xerxes, when he lashed the waves of the Hellespont.

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Before I take my leave, I should give you thanks for the many testimonies of your enmity and hat-

red so liberally expressed; but that to dilate on such a topic, or to mention my poor proportion of your enmity as a particular honour, would seem like assuming to myself some preeminence in talents, or professional learning. Far from having such vain thoughts, I am conscious that I attracted your hostility purely by the accident of being the natural rival of your learned and liberal friends; and that, in traducing assiduously my moral or professional reputation, you did no more than your office and function required.

But, to prove to you that I am no way insensible to the commendations of so distinguished a person, I willingly offer you my acknowledgments, for the only compliment of this nature that I may claim as peculiar to myself: You have been pleased long to honour me in all your writings, with the title of “the Junius and Janus of medical literature,” while you have reserved that of drawcansir for yourself! I thank you, Sir, for the compliment, whatever extent or construction you meant to give it: It is true, that you, and your very provident friends, have taught me the use of weapons which I never wished to wield, and could never condescend to use, otherwise than openly—in self-defence:—And, you have established one slight analogy on which to found your insulting compliment; for, by the violation of every principle, and the slandering of every rival, you have at last called me out to the defence of injured reputation, to resist tyranny, and to sustain the constitution of that lesser republic, of which I am a member.

The irony of comparing me with the greatest master of eloquence in modern times, I can easily bear; it is no shame to be inferior in the powers of persuasion: but, whatever talents I have, shall be fairly used in the cause of my profession; while to you I owe, and shall ever acknowledge them, the benefits of an illustrious subject, and a celebrated name.

I remain, therefore, by your own peculiar election, your most obedient servant,

&c. &c.

## LETTER II.

Sketch of the Medical Character, from the Lectures of the late Dr John Gregory, on the Qualifications and Duties of a Physician, as contrasted with the Conduct of his Son.

THERE was a time, when, by arts no way commendable, you had gained so much, that to strive for more was folly. “*Temerarium est secundis non esse contentum,*” you had wrought subtilly, and succeeded wonderfully; your policy was not publicly suspected; your designs were

not opposed; you might have continued to possess an hospital, and to profit by the patronage of all its surgeons; you might have seen your rivals melt away from before you, their reputations blighted by more secret arts; but, you gave way to all your worst passions, and proved once more, that “though the art of eloquence is taught by man, the Gods alone inspire the wisdom of SILENCE.”

Rest! Rest! perturbed spirit! You have a Professorship; you have an Hospital; you have a club of surgeons; you have a partner! Needs there be added to all these the cruel expedient, of books such as you are accustomed to compose! Calumnies, for the benefit of a few, the misery of many, and the disgrace of a whole profession?

Of that profession you were appointed, in an evil hour,—no! you were born, a protector and defender; but such a one, as has from time to time arisen in ill-starred lands, to exercise tyranny, and provoke revolutions: from the most dignified station, you have descended to the most odious and degrading depredations; and character, more precious than life, is your constant prey. For this you stand arraigned at the bar of the public. The talents which you should have improved for the promotion of science, and the good of your fellow-creatures, you have devoted to acts of jealousy and vengeance.

I willingly acknowledge the privileges of your rank: I acknowledge it difficult to believe, that a gowned and salaried instructor of youth should engage in cabals unworthy of his profession, and live in the continual indulgence of the most malignant



passions: But when you rudely assailed the reputation of others, you little thought you were violating those decencies and restraints, which are the best guardians even of the fairest reputation. You have prepared for your own trial! as a professor, your reputation was in some measure sacred; but you have violated the sanctuary of your own order, and cannot retire into it again, and lay hold on the horns of the altar: "If a man comes presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile, then shalt thou take him, even from mine altar, that he may die."

I meet you on that ground, on which you challenge all good men to meet you, on the principles of our profession, and the honesty of your individual actions: Of these I hold myself a competent judge: Your conduct you have not scrupled to expose freely to the world, and I am prepared openly to discuss it. Were I unskilled in the morals, or needed to go out of my own feelings, for the principles of the medical profession, I should appeal to the code delivered by your worthy father; would it were not dishonoured by the conduct of his son!

It is not possible to undertake a duty of this nature, without hesitation, without a desire to compare our own opinions with those of men who have reflected impartially on the nature of this duty. Dr Aitken, in those letters to his son, which, next to your father's elegant book, is respected by our profession, urges him to that proud, virtuous, independent conduct, which an injured profession demands; and he urges the duty of individual resistance against aggressions of this nature, with manly freedom, as a general and an abstract question, without any possible

feeling of personal malice. “The public (says this gentleman) is indeed just and generous, when convinced; but calumnies are readily adopted, and the refutation of them always costs some exertion. A man fails in duty due to society, as well as to himself, who, through indolence or apathy, suffers malignity and falsehood to triumph in the accomplishment of their purpose: They should be opposed boldly, speedily, and openly: Every step in the contest should be clear and decisive, and principles should be aimed at, however hemmed in by forms and consequence. Every man capable of doing a secret injustice, is a coward: He will shuffle, equivocate, and shrink; but, if held up in the firm grasp of truth and courage, he cannot escape an ignominious exposure.”

These are the deliberate councils of a father to that son, whose honourable conduct in life must have been a subject of tender anxiety; who would have shrunk from the wicked thought of instilling into his mind the passions of hatred, revenge, or any kind of cruelty; who would not have involved a beloved son rising into manhood, in ungenerous and jealous quarrels; nor willingly throw him on the stage of the world a fool-hardy champion in the scenes of strife!—From this father, who shews his reverence for his profession, by the care with which he cultivates the morals of his son, I take my privilege of arraigning the proudest and most insulting, the most unprovoked aggressor that has ever appeared in our profession: From your honoured father shall I quote those principles of moral conduct and feeling, by which I mean to try this cause.

Ever since I have been an observer of human actions, you have shown yourself a contemner of all usual decencies and proprieties ! of your father's counsels and your father's virtues ! No longer guided by that star which shone upon your early voyage, driven by every gust of jealousy, and without a destined course to run, you have drifted early in life into the flats and shallows of a ruined reputation.

You seem to have indulged a notion, that there is a servility and mediocrity in submitting to the reputed rules of morality ; a sort of sneaking and understrapping prudence, unworthy of a genius like yours. Were it not from a conviction, that the very words in which I should recommend such humble virtues to your imitation, would provoke your contempt, I should advise you in the words of Pliny, to study the writings, and follow the footsteps of your father : “ *Invenio autem apud sapientes honestissimum esse majorum vestigia sequi, si modo recto itinere processerint.* ” \*

“ *Decorum, decency, and propriety,* ” are ranked by your father as the first among the virtues of a physician. “ A physician (he observes) besides the good that he has it in his power to do by professional skill, has daily occasions of displaying his virtues of patience, good nature, generosity, compassion, and all the gentler virtues that do honour to human nature.” When he is to describe the moral qualities required in the character of a physician, he

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\* Lib. IV. Ep. 8.

risers into that enthusiasm which shows how sincerely he felt for the afflictions of his fellow-creatures. "The chief of these virtues is humanity; that sensibility of heart which makes us feel for the distresses of our fellow-creatures, and which, of consequence, incites us, in the most powerful manner, to relieve them. Sympathy produces an anxious attention to a thousand little circumstances that may tend to relieve the patient, an attention which money can never purchase; hence the inexpressible comfort of having a friend for a physician. Sympathy naturally engages the affection and confidence of a patient, which is in many cases of the utmost consequence to his recovery. If the physician possesses gentleness of manners, and a compassionate heart, and what Shakespear so emphatically calls "the milk of human kindness," the patient feels his approach like that of a guardian angel, ministering to his relief; while every visit of a physician who is unfeeling and rough in his manners, makes his heart sink within him, as at the presence of one who comes to pronounce his doom.\*

Your father, anxious for the preservation of professional character, pure and untainted with any affectation of rudeness, proceeds to vindicate a soft and gentle nature from the imputation of weakness. "Experience demonstrates, that a gentle and humane temper, far from being inconsistent with vigour

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\* Lectures on the Duties and Qualifications of a Physician, by John Gregory, M.D. F.R.S.—Revised and corrected by Dr James Gregory, p. 18.

of mind, is its usual attendant; and that rough and blustering manners generally accompany a weak understanding and mean soul; and are, indeed, frequently affected by men void of magnanimity and personal courage, in order to conceal their natural defects.”\*

I will not, lest I should be accused of more than usual malice, contrast your state of mind with that which your father has so happily portrayed. But, amidst all your splendid acquirements, I will take the liberty to remind you of one great study, without which talents never can be acquired, never will be respected, “Study the character becoming a physician.—*Et veræ numerosque modosque ediscere vitæ.*”

It is a proof of genius to form a high conception of the office and duties to which life is to be devoted; and it is allowed to a physician, who is to be the friend and comforter of his fellow-creatures, in hours of pain and anguish, to form an exalted one; to set before himself some illustrious example, or some imaginary model, so that, by aiming at ideal excellence, perhaps beyond his reach, he may at least attain to what is good and estimable. The forming a just and dignified conception of the duties of life, is the great and regulating talent, from which all diligence and enthusiasm must flow. This your father must have felt when he planned these Dis-

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\* Ibidem, p. 20.



courses on the Qualifications of a Physician, and taught, before he entered on the more immediate duties of his office, a love of truth, modesty, and candour ! enjoined a temperate conduct, and a virtuous forbearance, and universal good-will towards others ! reminded the profession \* of the ruinous consequences of quarrels ; and portrayed the character of a humane, learned, independent physician.

“ Physicians, considered as a body of men who live by medicine as a profession, have an interest separate and distinct from the honour of the science. In pursuit of this interest, some have acted with candour, with honour, with the ingenuous and liberal manners of gentlemen ! Conscious of their own worth, they disdained every artifice, and depended for success on their real merit ! But such men are not the most numerous in any profession ; some impelled by necessity, some stimulated by vanity, and others anxious to conceal ignorance, have had recourse to various mean and unworthy arts to raise their importance among the ignorant, who are always the most numerous part of mankind.”† Your father delighted more in warning than in reproving : He took no malignant pleasure in avenging faults, but had a sincere desire to preserve the principles and feelings of our profession pure, and void of offence : He well knew that enthusiasm in study, and a liberal, inde-

\* Gregory's Discourses on the Qualifications of a Physician.

† Ibidem, page 4.

pendent, and manly spirit, are best nourished by inspiring youth with just and dignified conceptions of the duties of life ! That he would study with ardour who loved his duties, that he would practise his art with generous and manly feelings, who had been bred up in the study of philosophy and science, and had learnt a noble contempt of every thing base and unworthy.

The character of a sober and judicious, a learned and independent physician, however tame and trivial those appellations may seem, to one of your singular genius, will, I doubt not, continue to be admired by the enlightened and reflecting part of the world. “ To praise a man’s self, (says Bacon) cannot be decent, except it be in rare cases ; but to praise a man’s office or profession, he may do it with a good grace, and a kind of magnanimity.” This magnanimous praise marks the character, and adorns the writings of the most illustrious men : and we cannot but refer their excellence to that enthusiastic love of their profession, which must be the only true support the mind can have through all the difficulties of study, and all the trials of life. It is with especial pleasure that I recollect the ardent and eloquent eulogium of Blackstone on the science of law : Even his timid and servile spirit expanded, when he revolved in his mind the great and benevolent ends for which it was destined, and the liberal and generous views of society and of human nature, which its practice is calculated to inspire. I think I might venture to assume his very words : for ours, too, “ is a science, which employs in its theory the noblest faculties of the mind ; and

exerts, in its practice, the cardinal virtues of the heart: A science, which is universal in its uses and extent, accommodated to each individual, and yet comprehending the whole community."

Our profession, by making us feel whatever man can feel, by giving us a direct and daily interest in the sufferings of our fellow-creatures, carries along with it, by the special appointment of Providence, the purest principles of charity and benevolence. Whether you have indeed the temperament of sensibility, or have cherished the cardinal virtues of the heart, it belongs not to us to judge; but if it be so, it is to be lamented, that your outward conduct so little corresponds with what passes within: by that alone are we to judge: and I think you have, unless every sense deceives me, accomplished a character nearly the reverse of all that I have ever supposed commendable or virtuous in your condition of life. A soldier without courage, a general without conduct, a statesman without sentiments of patriotism or virtue, a divine void of all sense of religion, are characters not half so odious, as a physician loose in principle, vindictive in quarrels, floundering with vociferation and levity, and every appearance of heartless folly, through a profession whose slightest scenes are agitating, and might well be supposed to sober the judgment, and reclaim the heart.

We can find no theory for the singularities of your life in your first education, in your father's precepts, nor in the manners of your early friends. It must be from turbulent dispositions, and a rude and insolent neglect of what is esteemed amiable, that you have

departed altogether from your father's doctrines, for which the morals you have endeavoured to substitute, are likely rather to increase our respect. Had it been my fortune to be born to support the interests of a great, but declining University, I know not the object, whether of vanity, power, or riches, which could have seduced me from the study of science, till I had attained a name equal to that of my predecessors! I know not the man I should have honoured with my anger, nor the offence I should have condescended to rebuke, otherwise than by shewing an example of liberality, truth and candour, of good faith towards my profession, of diligence in the cultivation of science.

How different, how very different, your manners, from those becoming a chosen servant of the public, an instructor of youth, from those hitherto natural to men excelling in moral or physical science! You presume, in the face of an abused and insulted public, to differ with a Royal College on a moral cause! You boast of the most implacable vindictive spirit, and yet impute those never-ending enmities to the most beneficent feelings: You dispute with every individual; insult, revile, and traduce, all under pretence of charity, and still on account of some moral cause!

The sight of individual worth or talents but inflames your anger, the aggregate distracts you. No longer contented with private defamation, you aspire to libel colleges and public bodies. You have reproached the most faultless individuals with ungentlemanlike crimes; and now are circulat-

ing in private, a volume of 700 pages, defaming all your brethren, and defying the Royal College of Physicians! (this alone was wanting to make me truly proud of your enmity, so long, and so handsomely expressed) :—and still, still it is the virtuous and delicate Gregory, disputing about a “ Moral Cause !”

Sir, it is untrue: Without much of that metaphysical skill which you boast of, and which I must not aspire to; or more of logic than sound sense and a clear understanding may be supposed to confer; I will adventure to prove, that you, Dr James Gregory, Professor of the Practice of Physic in the University of Edinburgh, do not differ with the Royal College of Physicians,—dare not differ with any human being, however low and base he may be, on any moral cause! That in the whole catalogue of moral offences, or professional sins, there is left not one on which you dare differ with the most sly and knavish creature living!

Though each member of that much respected body, the Royal College, forgetting what he owes to his profession and its usages, were to abandon all the usual habits of a physician, and to ally himself with a leesh of surgeons, or of surgeon-apothecaries in disguise, or with a copartnery of seven such busy designing creatures; were to accompany them in their practice, occupy himself in their politics, partake their gains, and avenge their quarrels; much as a man of your fine feeling of honour might abhor such innovations, yet would you not dare to differ from all or any of them for “ that moral cause !”



Were each Fellow of the College; Dr Monro, Dr Rutherford, Dr Hamilton, Dr Duncan, and Dr Home, to choose out for himself an Associate and Partner from among the members of his own college; were he to intercept, by such mean contrivance, those consultations which others could better fulfil! were each to announce such covetous and cunning arrangements, by printed hand-bills!—yet would you not dare to quarrel with any of them for “that moral cause!”

Were each member of the College, thus involved in trade, floundering through practice, and distracted with quarrels, to send into the world scurrilous pamphlets, traducing all his brethren!—though that were a grievous moral and professional sin, yet I verily believe the virtuous Dr Gregory would hardly think of quarrelling with one of the offenders for “that moral cause.”

Though the most distinguished member of that College were, in its full assembly, to stand up unabashed, and declare, with solemn asseverations, what every other member knew to be a direct falsehood! Though such asseveration struck the assembled College with astonishment at the moment, and produced an instantaneous and solemn pause! and were proved, by deliberate enquiry, and declared by a unanimous vote, to be a premeditated willing falsehood! Though such member, raising up his hand, swore, as in the presence of his maker, “*Suspiciens cœlum, terque quaterque manu pectus percussit honestum,*” that he knew nothing! of certain acts! or words! which he afterwards acknowledged himself to know, all

but one ! and proceeded upon that one word, to found the most quibbling, mean evasion ! Though all present were shocked with this scene, and exclaimed against the falsehood,

“ ———Clament periisse pudorem  
Cuncti pæne patres,”—

yet would not you dare to quarrel, even with that disingenuous creature, on “ that moral cause.”

Though your fellow members were not only to pour forth the bitterest and most groundless calumnies against you, but to print them,—to circulate them,—to pursue you to your most secret retreats ! to leave your brother, father, friends, no choice, no power of remaining neutral or ignorant of the abuse ! —were to thrust them importunately into every family, corrupting, before they were aware, the affections of your dearest friends ! perhaps of the partner of your most secret thoughts ! of those on whom alone you relied in all the trials of life for counsel and comfort ! Though those unnatural and most cruel aspersions were laid, “ like knives under your pillow,” strewed like poison in all your walks of life ! though you felt that such arts were undermining your prosperity, your serenity, your inward peace of mind ! yet would you not dare to quarrel with the most cruel and relentless of the kind, for “ that moral cause !”

You alone, Sir, have dared, during a course of years, to practise those cruelties, and so openly, so daringly, that I know not how any retribution can be imagined equal to the offence —That interdiction, cruel and vindictive as it is, which the Roman church

pronounced against unrepented crimes, could not, in my mind, more effectually separate its victim from society, and all the charities of life ! Driven by common consent to the highways, I know not on what unfortunate reputation you can prey ; it must be of those only who have strayed far from the accustomed paths and friendly protection of man.

## LETTER III.

Review of the Writings of Dr James Gregory, especially of a private Letter transmitted to Mr Bell, as an Apology or Palliative of his first Calumnies against the Younger Surgeons.

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ALL moralists have agreed to deprecate talents, much more the presumptuous assumption of talents, unqualified with goodness. “ They are a sort of ignis fatuus, leading us astray ; a fever of the mind, incompatible with the sober dictates of prudence: They tempt a man to the perpetration of bold bad deeds, and incline him rather to desire the admiration, than to promote the interests, of society.”\* You affect philosophy, and yet have woe-fully neglected the discipline of the mind, and have lived so as to convince us feelingly, that metaphysics is an unhappy study, inclining its votaries rather to “ desire the admiration, than to promote the inte-

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\* Godwin page 7.

rests of society." In you, this fever of the mind appears with all its most malignant symptoms.

" A pious fever, taught to burn

" An hour or two, to serve a turn."

I am now advancing to a discussion of those calumnious volumes, on which you have thought fit to rest your reputation, and which bear a wild and disorderly relation to the policy and whole conduct of your professional life. Voluntary effusions of this nature are always supposed to imply genius, and are committed, with little care or anxiety, to the usual fate of books. But you have been provident; you have made them palatable by an abundant infusion of low ribaldry, and popular by a much surer art! Surely a work can hardly fail to be popular, which is distributed gratis, and presented, as more plain and serviceable printed papers are, industriously to all comers and goers?

You have many designs, but only one passion, the passion of displaying talents; and your best friends will confess, that you have displayed abilities which it had been much wiser to conceal.

"———You would be thought

" Much wiser than a wise man ought."

The dishonour you yourself incur seems to damp your ambition as little as the sufferings you inflict. "Peream dum luceam," seems your chosen motto. But beware, Sir, lest while you seem to shine with the fullest splendour, a little puff of scorn extinguish you.

For the theory of his life, and the secrets of his success, no man is accountable, either to his profes-



sion, or to the world : But when his aggrandizement is at the expence of the studious and modest members of his profession ; when, abandoning the usual modes of cultivating practice, he resorts to public accusations against all his competitors ; when, unprovoked, he insults individuals with scurrilous tales or the lowest buffoonery, and colleges with reviling and contumely ; when he challenges enquiry, by violating every decency, and sets himself up “ an impudent and fearless mark,” what does it become gentlemen to do, whose names are coupled with his sorry jests?—“They fail in their best duties to society, who, through indolence or apathy, suffer malignity and falsehood to triumph in the accomplishment of their bad designs : it becomes them to oppose such arts speedily, openly, boldly : Every step in the contest should be made clear, and the culprit who would shuffle, equivocate, and shrink, should be held up in the firm grasp of truth and courage, an object of public scorn.”

Yet I am aware how painful these necessary cruelties are to public feeling ; how unwillingly good and impartial men yield themselves as parties, or even as spectators, in such a punishment : I am also aware that there is a kind of offenders, who, though abundantly insensible, while inflicting torments, fail not to evince their feeling by their outcries, when the lash is applied to their proper shoulders ; but it is a sensibility so ill-timed and shameless, as to excite no pity : when the severity of recrimination is justly proportioned to the offence, the most timid become willing spectators of their sufferings, and

feel nothing from their outcries ; it is not a zealot persecuted, but a criminal in the hands of justice.

You first introduced the spirit of defamation into this city, and made something very different from professional accomplishments the passport to professional fame. “ Even-handed justice is in this most just, commends th’ ingredients of our poisoned chalice to our own lips.” You perish by tortures of your own invention : You are burnt in effigy with the flames of your own works : A spectacle which even the rabble will enjoy,

“ ———— Sejanus ducitur unco.

“ Spectandus : gaudent omnes :—

“ Jam stridunt ignes, jam foliibus atque caminis

“ Ardet odoratum populo caput, et crepat ingens

“ Sejanus :”

There shall come a time for enquiring into the truth of that vain character you have drawn of yourself. At present I mean to remind you of those actions and connexions which signalized your entry into public life. A splenetic and cunning calumniator may, I confess, disturb the repose, and injure the reputation of the worthiest and most harmless of human beings ; but I address you in circumstances most unpropitious to those malignant arts,—openly ! at the risk of my reputation ! in the presenee of my fellow-citizens ! in the more awful presenee of a profession jealous of its honour. I am to review recent and very public transactions, to criticise the writings of one who does not yet repent, and is incapable of shame. “ A person may be misrepresented in re-

gard to a particular action, but it is scarcely possible that he should be so with respect to the whole tenor of his life." \*

I believe, Sir, that your own recollections, if you ever allow yourself to pause on the events of your past life, must always refer you to the æra of that intrigue in the hospital, and that wondrous Memorial with which the drama opened, as the period in which your abilities were exhibited in their utmost splendour, and all your passions for noise, tumult, and public praise, were gratified. It was a period of needful exertion; for while an awful stillness prevailed in your orbit, great attractions were operating, and powerful combinations forming, all around you. No longer disposed to trifle with the world, nor delay your fortunes, you threw off the slough of philosophy in which you had lain concealed, and burst upon us with a work truly practical, a Memorial addressed to the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, which required, I doubt not, peculiar talents to compose for it is one which required no small share of ingenuity to describe,—a volume big with the elements of strife.

When your Memorial first appeared, the sanity of your intellect was suspected; but if that first conjecture was in any degree true, it was an insanity which might be computed by the compass, a madness only north-north-east! a madness which hath method in it. The pretext for this voluminous

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\* Theory of Moral Sentiments, p. 417.

Memorial was charity, and the sufferings of the poor; but the substance of it formed a most detestable comment on the text. Your charitable expostulations with the Managers of the Infirmary turned out a volume of calumny: It had no mark of good intentions or sober sense: It was not a modest and affecting memorial, presented privately to the Managers of the Hospital, who alone had power to redress; but a tissue of rude contemptible jokes upon the profession of surgery, and malignant tales and insinuations to the dishonour of the younger surgeons, published in quarto, and distributed gratis with unlimited profusion, and for purposes so certainly gainful as to repay the cost, while its success was a mortifying testimony, indeed, to your talents: It was chiefly acceptable to those who had imbibed no fastidious habits from their education, “to a kind of readers, whose most agreeable feast is upon murdered reputation, who admire some half-witted thing who wants to be thought a bold man, after having lost the character of a wise one: Him they dignify with the name of a genius: His tawdry lampoons are called satires; his turbulence is said to be force, and his phrenzy fire!” \*

On the day on which this ominous volume was presented to me by the author, while it was as yet known to me only by report, I wrote the following private note, which in one of your quartos you have quoted with triumph.

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\* Goldsmith's Dedication to the Traveller,

Private Note addressed to Dr James Gregory, on the opening of his Intrigue in the Royal Infirmary.

“ Mr Bell presents compliments to Dr Gregory: Has received from Dr Gregory a copy of his Address to the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, on a subject in which it would be affectation in Mr Bell to say he had not a very particular interest.

“ From the moment in which Mr Bell heard of this Address, he resolved to take no selfish step which might interrupt any charitable purpose, or give trouble to a set of gentlemen who have now to conduct a business peculiarly delicate, where the most superficial observer may foresee a contention of interests and passions very afflicting to the Managers, who, when a question of this nature is brought before them, must decide. Mr Bell resolved, from the first, to wait the decision of the Managers, which he has no doubt will be honourable and impartial, tending only to the public good.

“ On every occasion of this nature, a man who is unavoidably interested, must feel a degree of uneasiness till he have resolved what line of conduct to pursue. Mr Bell has reflected on this subject of debate with no small anxiety, and finds reason to be contented with the resolution he at first formed, and to abide by it, as most modest and becoming a gentleman, and as especially proper in a professional man, who should seek promotion and success in the



world rather by his honest diligenece and private labours, than by cabal and solieitation. In this resolved state of mind, he was naturally surprised, and somewhat offended, to hear it reported that he was expected to answer Dr Gregory's Memorial; and it is to explain his sentiments on this subject that he troubles Dr Gregory with this long note.

“ Mr Bell has not opened this Memorial. He cannot suppose it possible for Dr Gregory to mix any private considerations with a public question so important as this; and Mr Bell is persuaded, that whatever Dr Gregory may have said of the eonduet of one partiular department in the Royal Infirmary, he will never forsake so far the dignity of his station as to say any thing insulting to the profession, or dangerous to any individual. Such things could never enter into a Memorial addressed by a man of talents to a respectable and publie body. Mr Bell having no personal fear, can the more freely say to Dr Gregory, that, from his former conduet, Mr Bell has reason to expeet every thing liberal, fair, and honourable.

“ Mr Bell takes this opportunity of assuring Dr Gregory, that whatever may be the reports of idle or busy people, he can imagine no possible motive, on his part, for answering a memorial which has in view an object so charitable and praise-worthy as that of eonducting to the best advantage the only Hospital in this great city. Nothing could engage Mr Bell in any public dispute, nor be an apology to himself for writing any pamphlet or memorial, except the sineere hope of being useful, or the neces-

sary duty of self-defence. And if it were possible that, in regard to the administration of the Royal Infirmary, and his public duties there, he were forced to reply to any public charge, it must be of a nature which would involve his reputation and very existence as a professional man. But Dr Gregory is too sensible of all this to do any thing ungenerous: and Mr Bell is too seriously impressed with the consequences of any such imputation, either to disregard any, even the slightest accusation, or to enter unpremeditatedly or rashly upon a public vindication. The step which is to give a colour to a man's future life and reputation, which is to enlarge or take away his opportunities of being useful in his public profession, may well admit of deliberate reflection.

“Mr Bell will not pay Dr Gregory so poor a compliment as to neglect reading what he is pleased to publish; but, (without being wanting in every proper and decent attention to his own character, station, and future expectations in life,) he will wait composedly the issue of this business, by which alone the design of this address can be judged of. If Dr Gregory have in this business nothing but the interests of humanity in view, his Memorial will contain in it nothing of partiality or party-spirit, and it must carry along with it the approbation of every good and well-disposed man.”

*No. 9. George Street.”*

What is there in this note that you should quote with triumph, or I be ashamed to avow? I cannot

perceive that I have failed to express the sentiments of a gentleman in respectful, though cold language. It seems to me that I had rather pitied the absurdity of your situation, and admonished you with something of the tenderness of a friend. I ventured to remind you of the dignity of your own station, which I feared was compromised ; and of the respectability of that body (the Royal College of Surgeons) which I learnt by report it was your intention to defame. I ventured to hint to you, that the interests of humanity, and the constitution of an hospital, and especially the manner in which its duties were fulfilled, should hardly be discussed in a volume of this complexion, but required rather to be touched with a delicate and gentle hand. But to you language of this kind is little persuasive : Your vanity ! ever on the watch to deceive you : Your vanity ! the sole medium through which you see, hear, or understand, brings false intelligence from every sense ; and taught you, on this occasion, to construe a warning and a remonstrance, into a precious testimony to your great talents,—This is what you quote with exultation. ?

I will not conceal from you that I had suspicions of your honesty, even when I wrote that note ; but I little imagined how busy you had been in gratifying the most malignant passions of your associates, and exposing the younger part of my profession, that class of men with whom I was connected, to contempt ; though I confess I was indeed surprised to hear of your excessive delicacy, your tender charity, and your burning zeal in the cause of the poor.

No sooner had you committed this first crime against your profession, than you felt all the hesitation and perplexity of guilt, without one pang of remorse : You heard that the insolence of your Memorial had excited universal detestation, and that I had been appointed by the younger Surgeons, to write a reply ; a piece of intelligence which only excited that cunning which is the resource of weak minds. You set yourself busily to work, night and day, (for you were then upon a journey) travelling, prescribing, foaming, and composing, in Dumfries-house, on the roads, in the inns, to compose a counter-memorial, a supplement to your scurrilous quarto, but of a very humble, peaceful complexion ! A paltry, a very paltry device, to prevent the just retribution which was hanging over you.

This second memorial you transmitted to me sealed, and in the insidious form of a private letter ; and I felt, for the first time, how impossible it is, in certain circumstances, not to pity the meanness even of an adversary. Could you imagine me so inconsiderate as to be the dupe of this sort of cunning ? Could you imagine me so void of honour as to abandon, for any cajoleries you might use, that honourable cause, the cause of my profession, and of my younger brethren, to which I was invited by a public request ? What action of my former life could entitle you to believe, that any promises of place, power, or influence from you, or the Managers of the Hospital, could bribe me to an act of treachery and dishonour ? Could you imagine that, after having accepted such an office, after having been called upon “ to draw



up an answer to the GROSS MISREPRESENTATIONS of Dr James Gregory, and to VINDICATE the CHARACTER of the YOUNGER SURGEONS," I could be so weak as allow you to shelter under the cunning apologies of a private letter, insults, which, being public, demanded a public rebuke, and deserved a more severe one than, in that period of your career, I thought it fit to inflict?

I had then glanced my eye over that voluminous memorial which I was appointed to answer: I perceived that the author was capable of any thing: I saw with astonishment the extent of his little selfish designs, and all the cunning of his charity, and his liberality, and his candour! I was conscious that the private papers of such a person could contain nothing but some artful attempt to detach me from my appointed duty; some mean practices upon my credulity, or my ambition; and, in short, a private and inefficient apology for insults shockingly public, and such as never could be retracted.

From the moment in which I received the

" August 9. 1800.

\* " *At a MEETING of the JUNIOR MEMBERS of the ROYAL COLLEGE of SURGEONS, it was Resolved,*

*" That Mr John Bell be requested to draw up an Answer to Dr Gregory's Memorial, to be presented to the Managers of the Royal Infirmary at their first meeting, for the purpose of doing away those GROSS MISREPRESENTATIONS of the CHARACTER and CONDUCT of the YOUNGER SURGEONS, contained in the said Memorial.*

*" That the manner in which this Memorial shall be drawn up shall be left entirely to Mr Bell's discretion and good sense, subject only to their revision before it be presented."*



commission for your trial \*, I could regard you in no other light than as a public culprit, and treated the insulting and corrupt proposal, of reading your private apologies, with scorn. Your opinions of your own actions, and that very opposite opinion so strongly expressed by the younger surgeons, could never be supposed to agree: I left the seals of your papers untouched, and hardly condescended to make a conjecture concerning their contents. I proceeded upon one plain principle, “ *Prima est ultio quod se judice, nemo nocens absolvitur* \*.”

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\* It was by a very few, only, of the younger Surgeons, that I was requested to reply to that insulting and brutal Memorial, which the Managers of the Infirmary, unacquainted as yet with this gentleman's dispositions, had the rashness to acknowledge; and those few were so alarmed with threats of calumny, which would effectually ruin their reputation, that they shrunk from their duty, and had not the courage to support me. I had completed my appointed task before I was informed of their timid dispositions: I published the reply at my own peril: though not six members had the constancy and courage to support me, I had the honour of receiving, unexpectedly, I hope I need not say unsolicited, and long after I had ceased to attend their meetings, the public thanks of the Royal College of Surgeons, expressed in sufficiently flattering terms, and signed by a gentleman not very propitious to so polite a communication, and who was himself to become a Surgeon of the Hospital, only in the case of Dr Gregory's intrigue proving successful.

“ SIR,

“ *At the desire, and in the name of the Royal College of Surgeons, I have the honour of returning you their thanks for the Answer you have composed to Dr Gregory's*

You have since thought fit to communicate to the world this apologetic epistle; a smooth and pleasing composition, an antidote to fury, and a very opiate to the senses. I think, Sir, so voluminous and wearisome are your books, that you must have long adopted the theory of Pope Blount, "That reading is only a kind of dosing idleness, and the book a mere opiate that enables the reader to sleep with his eyes open."

But amidst the languor of this thing, "written (as you tell us) in Dumfries house, on the roads and in the inns," betwixt asleep and awake, though you sometimes nod, you never forget your purpose. Amidst the chaos of irrelevant matter, the expressions of wheedling duplicity stand prominent. It was indeed a pleasing tale: you explained to me, how liberal the Managers of the Infirmary were! how impartial, generous, and zealous, Dr Gregory was, the disinterested champion of the afflicted poor! How pleasing it would be to such liberal men to receive the communications of a person of my distinguished talents! how gratifying to carry along with you my approbation! and you shewed how easy it must be for me to have all the influence in the election of sur-

*Memorial; and of intimating to you, that the College approve of the manner in which you have expressed their general sense of the relation which exists between the College of Surgeons and the Royal Infirmary.*

"I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,  
JAMES LAW."

"John Bell, Esq. Surgeon.  
December 9. 1800."

geons, which such talents should give me. Cajoleries, and threats, and promises, and equivocations, were alternately employed to corrupt or to alarm me : You endeavoured to make me counsel, or rather evidence, against those who reposed on me, and tried to lead me along “ soul-soothing panegyric’s flowery way !” It was a strange part, indeed, for so uncouth a performer to undertake ; but you had spent your anger, and your fears had come upon you.

“ Flattery direct, how pleasing art thou to the ear of man !” Were you full of this doctrine, were you persuaded that you were a master in this pleasing art, when you sat down to compose the following letter ?

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I employ the first hour I could command to answer your very interesting card. I trust you know already that I was gone out of town before you sent it to my house. If I had been at home when it came to my house, I should have answered it immediately, and should have lost no time in communicating it to the several Managers of the Royal Infirmary, to whom I am sure it will give, as it has given to me, very great pleasure ! ! I shall not fail to communicate it to them, as soon as I return to Edinburgh, which, unless I am prevented by some unforeseen accident, will be in a week from this time.

“ This, independently of the gratification which I know it WILL BE TO ALL OF THEM ! I should think it my duty to do in justice to you. I am heartily glad that you have been the first to express so openly and

so strongly those just and liberal sentiments which your card to me contains, and which I must take THE LIBERTY TO SAY, DO YOU VERY GREAT CREDIT!

“ I understand that you, by your talents and activity, have acquired a great ascendancy among your professional brethren, and are regarded as the great leader among them !

“ From your intimate acquaintance with many persons and transactions, totally unknown to me, you may have good reason to believe that many of your professional brethren are very different from you ! in point of character ! and much inferior to you in understanding ! and knowledge !

“ As you have probably read my Memorial by this time, I need not tell you that it contains no attack nor censure on you. On the contrary, in the only passages in which you are alluded to, for you are not mentioned in it, you will find that it is not only without contumely, but with respect and honour ! in the one place, “ as a man of talents, and for ought I know a very good surgeon.” In the other, “ as the man of the greatest talents ! and the leader of one party !”

“ I never knew nor suspected, till I read your card, that you had defended yourself against any such attacks from Jonathan Dawplucker, or any body. In the second place, I shall tell you frankly, that I think you did perfectly right to defend yourself against such a virulent attack ; nor should I blame you in the least, if, on receiving such provocation, (for I have now read that first Dawplucker) you have defended yourself with asperity !

Your defamatory Memorial had not been two days published, presented, and privately circulated; before you were aware of all the dangers of your situation: But, with your usual cunning, while you acknowledge the injurious applications of your mean, gossiping, slanders, about the intoxication, the blundering, and the inhumanity and the incapacity, of the surgeons, you appeal to my AUTHORITY, and would fain make ME a treacherous evidence in your bad cause.

“ I have no doubt either of the justness or the severity of the applications that have been made of my remarks ! I have no doubt that you, who have given such STRICT ATTENTION for many years to the practice of Surgery in the Royal Infirmary ! and who are so well qualified to judge of it, could easily produce 50 or 100 instances, not one of which I ever heard of, but all of them unquestionably authentic, and abundantly shocking ; all of which, or any one of them, would too strongly confirm and illustrate my general observations.”

Your threats of traducing by name, each of those whom you chose, for reasons of your own, to defame, under the general denomination of younger surgeons, are equally contemptible with those flatteries by which you expected to corrupt their appointed defender.

“ Would any of your brethren wish to see a distinction established among the members of your College, of the gentlemen and the Shylocks ? Would any of them choose to be classed with the



Shylocks, and to fare accordingly, for the rest of his *life*?

“ The conflict which you foresee, of interests and passions, cannot be afflictive to us; but may be injurious to the slender funds of the Infirmary; and your brethren who engage in it, may find, when too late, GOOD REASON TO REPENT OF IT BITTERLY!!!

“ I was aware, from the first, how shocking it would be to the public, how injurious to the hospital, and how cruel to the individual surgeons who had been unfortunate.” “ Disclosures of this nature” would soon produce all the effect which we want; but they would do a great deal more, which we do not want, and I should be very sorry to see. IF IT EVER SHALL BE FOUND NECESSARY, WHICH I AM HAPPY TO THINK IT NOT LIKELY TO BE THE CASE, TO MAKE THEM KNOWN, IT CERTAINLY SHALL BE DONE!!!”

The Managers, Sir, may not perhaps be ashamed of this language; they may be proud of their advocate, or rather of their bravo, who has prepared for deeds of this description. The language, Sir, in which those threats are conveyed, and the tattling tale - bearing dispositions they exhibit, resemble more the manners of a servants-hall, than of the hall of a Royal Infirmary, or of a Royal College.

With all your equivocations about Dawplucker, I well knew, that under that title you threatened my character: You have since made good your insignificant threat, and in a volume of 500 pages have wasted not one line on any other theme than the

depreciating my reputation for skill as an operator, or for honour or humanity, and this four years after your infirmity intrigue was completed, when the pretext of usefulness was long past, and when you were actuated by the pure and natural motive of rancour. Proud of nothing so much as successful stabbing, you are disconcerted only when your victim seems not to feel the blow! You have found it equally difficult, I believe, to taint my reputation, as to corrupt my judgment, and are every way disappointed.

You next proceed with your usual delicacy and liberality, to speak of the mutual facilities and reciprocities of the profession. "You surely know what I do, fifty or a hundred times in a year, to patients who, not understanding the distinction of our professions, apply to me when they labour under complaints in which I can do them little or no service, and which properly belong to your province! I can do nothing but refer them to gentlemen of your profession for relief!"

But this argument of the possible happiness of being more privately allied with a physician of this liberal and honourable turn of mind, who had it not only often, but "fifty or a hundred times a-year," in his power to assign over to surgeons those patients to whom he can do LITTLE OR NO SERVICE, was reinforced by the surer prospect of public honours and promotion.

"Though all the members of your College cannot be equally well qualified for that duty, many more, I am convinced, are so than can ever be want-

ed to do that duty to the best advantage ; just as in the case with the College of Physicians, I am sure the Managers would be happy, as indeed it is their duty, to obtain every possible information and assistance to direct their judgment and choice in so important a business. I have no doubt that you could give them valuable and satisfactory information with respect to that important concern !

“ I should think it still better if you did it more privately, and only in writing ! I cannot offer to lay before them any such paper from you ; because I had already declared that I will take no concern in the choice of surgeons, either directly or indirectly. But any other of the Managers, I am convinced, will be glad to do it ! For the same reasons, you will understand, that I can neither second nor oppose your recommendation of particular surgeons ! *But you are welcome to state, that you offered it in consequence of my suggestion !*

“ And I think I can safely *promise* for the Managers, that they will faithfully pay due attention to any such communication from you ! that is, they will either do as you propose, or be ready, whenever there is occasion, to give good reasons for not doing so !

“ But you must not understand that I am authorised to *promise* for them, or that I think they should *promise* that they will be directed by your opinion.”

You have been accustomed, no doubt, to associate with men, on whom such *threats* and such *promises* ! have an irresistible influence : Yet, could you believe that I should be brought to commit myself in

in treason against my profession, and especially against the younger members, my companions and friends who confided in me? Could you suppose me so dishonourable as to read your paper; so mean as to be seduced? Indeed, Sir, the scheme was worthy of its author. And when I remember how easily the slightest error in judgment might have betrayed me into an imprudent step, I cannot but reflect with thankfulness on its ill success.

Your *promises* so much resemble honest *promises*, that you are obliged, even while you are insinuating that they are very honest good *promises*, to protest that they are not so! Your hints that I should be permitted to name others to a place in the Infirmary, implied that Managers, so ready to receive my suggestions, would not fail to name myself: Yet you were careful to protest that it was possible those whom I suggested might not be appointed, and it became then manifestly possible that I might not be named myself!

Had I perused this precious memorial, and been seduced by false fair words, I might have been left as a just punishment to lament my unworthiness, and “curse those juggling fiends that palter with us in a double sense, that keep the words of promise to our ear, and break it to our hopes.”

## LETTER IV.

A Critique on the Stile of Composition, in which Professor GREGORY is supposed to excel, adorned with Specimens, and enriched with Notes ; chiefly taken from that Volume which he thought fit to entitle a MEMORIAL, addressed to the Managers of the Royal Infirmary.

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“ I was in no degree the natural enemy of your reputation, nor the rival of your practice ; and should with pleasure have seen Dr Gregory receiving the just homage of the learned and good :” My mind was open to every favourable impression ; I kept my conscience and allegiance free ; and if I had a wish, it was, that all I had heard of that extravagant Memorial, should be but the ebullitions of those professional interests and jealousies, which it was calculated to excite. What was my astonishment when I opened this volume, “ o’er-run with wit, and destitute of sense,” ruinous to the harmony of society, big with the elements of strife ! when I found the dignity of the Professor, and the mild and amiable character of the Physician, quite abandoned, and the tender tones of



charity drowned in the declamations of the clamorous loquacious, fearless brawler in professional feuds.

My amazement every moment increased, when, from page to page I stumbled onwards amidst the most outrageous contempt of all other professions, and abuse of ours. When I saw, for the first time, a phenomenon difficult to believe, a man of reputed learning, and requiring only modest manners, and persevering study, to attain the highest rank; more eager to claim the praise of daring folly, than of professional prudence; displaying no other powers than those which are by all good men entirely despised: The “*lingua ventosa, audacia perdita.*”

“ ——— The rattling tongue  
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.”

When from page to page I turned still to no connected subject, but floods of ribaldry and profanity; jests to captivate the vulgar, and indecencies fit to disgust every thinking or feeling man! A mass of childishness and malignity, portentous, indeed, on which I was able to pronounce but too justly: When I found the peace of this city, and the honour of our profession ruined; and the multis utile bellum begun, “*Jamque fæces \* et saxa volant, fugiant-que ministri.*”

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\* This is an emendation by Pope, of this classical line, the propriety of which no one who has read Dr Gregory's Memorials will be inclined to dispute.

I never shall forget the impressions which I received from the first opening of this Memorial, nor the low degrading similes by which you, a Professor and a Gentleman, had chosen to represent the faults and follies of our profession, and the sufferings of the poor. Nothing can be more shocking to a correct taste, or well regulated mind, than reproofs designed for the reformation of morals, and lamentations intended to excite sympathy, uttered in such language as to provoke nothing but derision. In that Memorial are to be found no modest simple display of abuses which needed reform; no just appeal to the feelings of the Managers, or to their sense of duty; no sincere protestations of impartiality; nothing of that manner which goodness could not miss, which the occasion should have inspired: But, on the contrary, “short gleams of sense and satire out of time,” “*Satis loquentiæ, eloquentiæ parum.*” Low and most vulgar comparisons of our profession with every lower trade, “lawyers, wigmakers, taylors and shoemakers, milliners, cooks, dancing-masters, postilions, and physicians.” \* The younger surgeons

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\* “A charter from his Majesty may, in a moment, establish in this city, a ROYAL COLLEGE OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS: and if this were done, no doubt the good people of Edinburgh would find unspeakable comfort, in having their chimneys swept, just as at present they do in *getting their pulses felt, and their legs cut off, by the President and Fellows of a Royal College.* Yet I do not believe our chimneys would be better swept than they have hitherto been; *but there can be no doubt that the President and Fellows of that Sable College would entertain very high notions of*

of the infirmary you represented as cruel, incapable, uncharitable, drunken, and despicable, and threatened them with a detail of their misdeeds ! The operation-room of the infirmary you compared with the den of lions, and the patient as sitting like the prophet Daniel in the midst of them, with a minutia of scurrility beyond all belief. \*

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*their own personal and professional dignity ! and yet they would be, without one exception, the same vulgar, ignorant, dirty fellows, that they are at present."*

*2d Memorial, p. 246.*

\* If my reader should have the least desire to know how I can vindicate so harsh an expression as " the minutia of scurrility," let him read the following wretched puerile simile :

" As Mr Arrot remembers so well that curious scene, I should beg of him, the first day that he has leisure, to step in to Archer's Hall, and look at the picture of Daniel in the den of lions, (which is an excellent copy of the famous picture by Rubens at Hamilton), and then say whether the likeness be not very striking, I mean particularly the likeness in face and person between the prophet and the patient ; for as to the likenesses between the individual lions and certain surgeons who flourished here at the time of that consultation, (some fifteen or twenty years ago, I suppose), they certainly are much less perfect. But I have no doubt that a man of a quick eye, and some imagination, and competent knowledge of the physiognomies and *costume* of the Royal College of Surgeons at that time, *may even yet find out some of them, and give to several grim members of that tremendous consultation* " a local habitation and a name," with much plausibility of conjecture ; it being understood always *as a fixed general principle*, that the *lionesses*, who have no mane, represent the *crops*, while the *male lions*, with their majestic manes, very properly represent the graver and more awful members of the Royal College of Surgeons, *who wore long hair or great wigs!!!*"

*Memorial 2d, p. 12.*

The surgeons you represented like the unrelenting Jew, standing upon his bond, eager to cut his pound of flesh, and not unwilling to see the blood stream from the breast of his unfortunate debtor! The managers as bartering the limbs of the poor to the highest bidders among the surgeons! Their treason, in such contract, you compared with "the right which the magistrates usurp, of advertising to sell or let, for a certain term of years, the dung of the streets." The accommodation of the patients in that institution, you compared with the due accommodation, in point of board and lodging, of the rats and mice, who might get admission into the Infirmary, and fix their quarters in it." "The butchers are next represented as making a very supposable contract between the corporation of butchers and that of the tanners in Edinburgh! I shall *suppose* the tanners to pay to the butchers 500*l.* down; in return for which the butchers stipulated and bound themselves under a heavy penalty, besides performance of the condition, that all the tanners in Edinburgh should have the hides of all the bullocks admitted into the shambles and slaughtered there," &c.\*

"If an ox, at the moment when he is *admitted* into the shambles, *were minutely informed* of the contract in question, or were allowed to peruse it *at his leisure*! and, if he could *speak*! (What, for a ducat, would he say?) Why, he *might as well save himself the trouble*! for neither *he*, nor the ablest counsel he could employ (though these, of course, would

have an infinite deal to say on the subject) could say any thing to the purpose !”

“ When the ox is fairly admitted to the shambles, and slaughtered there ! and cut into pieces ! and roasted ! and boiled ! and eaten ! by the good people of Edinburgh !!! It is of no consequence to him ! who has the tanning of the hide ! I should almost guess that *it is* of little moment to him, WHETHER THAT OPERATION BE MORE OR LESS SKILFULLY PERFORMED !” \* Alas for the ox ! Can any thing be imagined more moving than the peaceable, unprotected, melancholy ox, thus bewailing his ill fortune ? a sentimental ox, too, able to read, and feel, and speak for himself ? Is there a creature wet or dry, by sea or by land, in all Æsop’s dominions, that could read through such a contract without tears in his eyes ? This apostrophe of the ox might beguile even the hardened surgeon into lamentation ! Oh ! for the melancholy Jacques to moralize on the condition of the ox weeping over this contract ! “ The wretched animal heaved forth such groans, that their discharge did stretch his leathern coat, almost to bursting, and his big round tears coursed one another down his innocent nose in piteous chace.”

Next comes the surgeon himself, brandishing his knife, accoutred as the Jew of Shakespeare, and endowed with more than Jewish malice : “ If I ever should meet with such a MONSTER, I should think I saw a *real living Shylock*, displaying his scales, whet-

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\* Gregory’s much admired Memorial, p. 174.



ting his knife, and insisting on cutting a pound of flesh from the breast of his miserable debtor, because it was the forfeit contained in his *bond*. But even the imagination of *Shakespeare* could conceive nothing so horrible as A WHOLE COLLEGE OR CORPORATION OF SHYLOCKS, each of them brandishing his whetted knife, and claiming his right, in his turn, to cut his pound of flesh from the breasts of those whom a rigorous contract had put in their power, and maintaining that this bloody right was indefeasible, and must be transmitted unimpaired to their successors through all generations."

I know not by what unlucky bias in your judgment, or loose habits in practice, it comes to pass, that you never cast your thoughts towards the scenes of consultations among physicians, without emotions of ridicule and contempt, which you are unwise enough never to restrain. You should recollect, that if physicians "conduct their consultations like those described by *Le Sage*, or pictured in the *Bath Guide*," the thing had better be concealed: That if "Physicians in London are so cool, methodical, and heartless, in taking their guineas, and sending a patient to Bath to stew! or to Bristol to die!" it is by no means the interest of a person such as you are, to tell the tale.—I really do not like your principles: Nay, what will still more astonish and alarm you, I cannot admire your wit. To all but *Mr Anstey*, or *Moliere*, or *Le Sage*; to all the sufferers, and all the actors in such scenes, a consultation should recal serious impressions; yours are al-

ways brilliant ! always eloquent ! as in the following wonderful parallel :

“ I wave here all consideration of those controverted points, which evil-minded people conceive to involve the everlasting business of *Ins* and *Outs*, and *Loaves* and *Fishes*. ”

“ I shall consider only such of their *CONSULTATIONS* as have nothing to do with *Ins* and *Outs*, and *Loaves* and *Fishes*, but relate to subjects which they must all understand, in which they are honestly interested, and act to the best of their judgment, unbiassed by any kind of party-spirit. Since this Memorial went to the press, there has been a grand consultation of both Houses to consider of some good and effectual prescription for the fashionable distemper called *Adultery* ! The subject must have been quite familiar to them, as many of the greatest and wisest men in the nation ! and also their wives ! and their sons ! and their daughters ! and their fathers ! and their mothers ! for many generations, have been grievously afflicted with that distemper.” &c. &c. &c.

“ Yet if one or two of the *Ins* were to meet with one or two of the *Outs*, quietly and privately, in consultation, to consider of any the most difficult question that could be discussed ; for example, a proposal for a new administration on a broad bottom, even I should expect that they would soon come to a right understanding ; and agree as perfectly as any two or four of the greatest Physicians in London could do ! about taking their guineas ! and sending a patient to be stewed at Bath, or to die at Bristol ! Not one of the orators, I humbly

conceive, though he had the lungs of Stentor, would waste one shred, or bestow one blast of them, on his brethren. But the case, I presume, would be widely different, if the same Honourable or Right Honourable Gentlemen were set down on the green benches in St Stephen's Chapel the day of a call of the house, and were obliged to consult in public on the same question. Then the spirit of the ORATOR! the POLITICIAN! the DEMAGOGUE! the WHIG! the TORY! the IN! the OUT! the MINISTER! and the PATRIOT! would be kindled in a moment, and would produce an explosion MORE LOUD, MORE USELESS, AND MORE PERNICIOUS, THAN A FIRE-DAMP IN A NEWCASTLE COAL-PIT!!!"

From reasoning that degrades, and wit that stupefies; from the ravings of vanity, fanaticism, and craftiness, good Lord deliver us!

For once, Sir, I agree with you on the nature of your Memorial: You have judged admirably of your own work: It was not without its dangers to yourself, as well as to others! For once I commend your prudence, and acknowledge that you had taken becoming precautions \* before publishing a quarto volume so full of spirited apostrophes, and eloquent parallels,

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#### ADVERTISEMENT.

\* "When this Memorial shall be laid on the table in Surgeons Hall, and five and forty scalpels, sharper than razors, shall be drawn at once to dissect it to the bone, the operators will not be less cautious or skilful in their business, for knowing that it has been REVISED BY COUNSEL LEARNED IN THE LAW."

*Gregory's Memorial.*

and figures, and similes which no other writer has ever ventured to use, and of which counsel, learned in the law, are the most competent critics and judges!

“The culliability of the inhabitants of this city,” a temper which you have not casually mentioned, but deliberately calculated upon, was that on which you reckoned to raise a reputation: The appetite for impressions of horror, and tales of scandal, you knew could not fail to open every ear to your calumnies, and procure you praise proportioned, I had almost said, to your appetite, but surely, I may say, suited to your genius! How inanimate and languid is the praise of the learned and polite? So cautious, so discriminating, so nice, so delicate, and doled out too with so niggardly and sparing a hand, as if it might spoil the very thing it doated on. But the hearty, thoughtless, open approbation of the many; the roar of applause which every indelicate jest, or sly tale, produces; the undistinguishing, promiscuous praise, from the mob, of all that the mob can read, of all that the mob can understand, is so exhilarating, so delightful, that I almost envy you your feelings.

It is true, Sir, that no author can be every way successful: It is true, some who affect a sort of a taste, sicklied over by learning, are offended with your very happiest jests, and not recollecting in their own reading any thing similar, have had the temerity to suspect that these must often have been pilfered from Joe Miller! and to declare, that your parallels of the Butchers and Tanners, and the much lamenting Ox, are the very melancholy of Moorfields!—But, let them judge and decide as fastidiously as

they please, you have been able to traduce your profession successfully, and by the aid of your counsel, safely : You have also mounted to that kind of eminence, as upon a public stage, which best suits your talents : What then needs the “ Drawcansir of medical learning” care, amidst the plaudits of the theatre,

“ Tho’ wisdom stares, and folly claps her hands.”

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With pains and diligence have I analyzed this celebrated Memorial, illustrating my critical observations with such extracts, as cannot fail to mark at once the force and the tendency of your genius. But, dear Sir, the wit ! The wit is inestimable and inexhaustible ! The delicacy of your illustrations, the gravity of your reasoning, the ornaments of your stile, are a new and fertile source of panegyric. \*

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#### \* SPECIMENS

*Of the WIT ! ELOQUENCE ! REASONING ! and ILLUSTRATIONS ! of this Memorial ! and of the TEMPER and DISPOSITIONS of Dr GREGORY ! proving that Proposition which he seems so anxious to establish ; viz. That he is the MOST INDELICATE AND VINDICTIVE OF HUMAN BEINGS.*

“ Frustra niti, neque aliud se fatigando nisi odium quærere, extremæ dementiæ est.”

#### GOOD LOGICAL REASONING.

“ The author of this Memorial knows, and is well aware likewise, that the general principles of good logical reasoning are,  
and



I know not by what misfortune it happens, that the merits of an author so voluminous, whose works are distributed gratis, should be so slightly appreciated, and so little known: Perhaps it is from the bulk of these volumes, containing two hundred octavo, and two thousand quarto pages, all revised by counsel learned in the law! perhaps from your uncommon depth of genius, a sort of *vivacité de pesenteur*, a native alacrity at sinking, that few of your gratuitous readers have wind or breath enough to dive after your profound sense, or sufficient knowledge of the world to understand some of your most curious and delicate allusions.

There is only one point on which I should allow myself to question your refined taste. I am sure you will be surprised when I mention to you, that I am extremely doubtful of the propriety of your most exquisite quotations. You have, by yielding to this

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### GOOD LOGICAL REASONING.

and must be, at all times, the same, and on all subjects whatever; for example, the same in Scotch law at present, as in Greek mathematics 2000 years ago! And likewise he knows that, except in mathematical science, there is no subject of reasoning, in which the real use and strict application of the principles of logic have been so well exemplified, and so much attended to, as in law.”

“ These preliminaries I have premised (says the memorialist, *i. e.* the premises, being as it were premised,) before I state logically that argument which I cannot *state legally*! Why for a ducat? for want of knowledge of the law.”

“ To what that *badness* is to which I here allude, which I have already in some measure explained, and which I undertake to prove and establish by the most decisive evidence.”

“ The

antiquated and pedantic stile, defeated the best efforts of your natural genius : This apology all must allow you, viz. that it is a very common prepossession you have given way to.

“ Nonsense with classic ornament is graced,  
To pass it current with the stamp of taste.”

You have endeavoured to transplant the beauties of Virgil and Lucretius, into your own uncultivated territory ; but they are exotics, and will not thrive, nor mingle with the wild entangled mass.—Your extracts from the poets and moralists of antiquity, are merely extracts, and “ lie like lumps of marble upon a barren moor, encumbering what they can never fertilise ;” but the beauties of Joe Millar, and other kindred authors, which are transplanted with more natural care, take kindly, and sprout lux-

### GOOD LOGICAL REASONING.

The *badness* in question is not like the badness of a mercantile transaction, implying or consisting in *loss* where *profit* was expected ; it is no kind of pecuniary loss by a disadvantageous or foolish bargain. It is *badness* relative to something of much higher importance and more interesting concern, which never can be appretiated in money ; and which, if withheld or impaired, cannot be compensated by money ; it is *badness* relative to that assistance which OUGHT TO BE GIVEN to numberless individuals, POOR AND UNHAPPY IN THEIR UTMOST NEED, when health and life are at stake with them ; *that* health and *that* life, which are their little all ! all ! all !

“ This I take to be the equity of the case.”

“ The *goodness* or *badness* therefore which I am to consider, are only different *degrees of goodness* ; but the difference may be very great ; and that is *bad* which is *less good* than what we know may be obtained, either in point of medicines, or of medical or chirurgical attendants.

“ If,

uriantly : They are become indigenious ; and even where we cannot recognise the flowers or leaves, the stalks may be seen twining round every clod, and peeping out from above the surface.

There are two points to which your ambition and excellent talents are seemingly directed : *First*, from your elegant apologues and similes of the “ Ox and the Contract,” “ The Butchers and Tanners,” “ The Parliament Men and the Physicians,” “ The Operations in the Den of Lions,” and “ The Explosions (loud, pernicious, and useless, I confess them to be) in the Newcastle coal-pits,” you are, I perceive, far gone in the persuasion that you are a wit ; and have improvidently resolved to sink the Philosopher and the Physician, and write henceforth with the free and careless air of a gentleman ! You dis-

### GOOD LOGICAL REASONING.

“ If, in one night, all the Surgeons of Edinburgh were removed to a better world ! where it is to be hoped they will all arrive in due time ! their eldest apprentices may be supposed the ablest surgeons of the city !” Certainly they might be fit for every purpose that Dr Gregory could have in contemplation !

But when sober, sound, logical reasoning does not make the due impression, the Memorialist knows how to have recourse to representations of a more splendid and poetical cast.

### SOMETHING GRAND.

“ Any person who shall fairly consider it in this point of view, will probably have some some notion of the pleasure I felt in reading Mr John Bell’s pamphlet, and the still greater pleasure which I felt when I heard that he had RECEIVED THE THANKS OF THE

ROYAL

dain to tame your spirit and genius, or dull its fires, by submitting to the fatigue of composition, or the trammels of criticism: "You should be pure air and fire, and the dull elements of earth and water never appear in you:" Your Memorial was not to be the spiritless thing a name so trivial might be supposed to imply! Nor an address! a pleading! a pamphlet! a poem! a farce!—but a wilderness of wit, where every thing, (as the facetious Peter singeth)

"Where every thing we see appear,  
Seems to exclaim, what business have we here?"

"Brevity is esteemed the soul of wit, and tediousness its limbs and outward flourishes:" I wish you had considered upon whose authority this has been hitherto believed! Shakespeare was no incom-

### SOMETHING GRAND.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS FOR THAT WORK." (We have much reason to fear that this gentleman's mind had suffered an IRRECOVERABLE degree of agitation on this TRYING occasion, as the rest of this splendid passage will but too surely prove "If not! let such a person consider what pleasure it would give to every friend of his country, to hear that the KING OF SPAIN! and ALL HIS SUBJECTS! had marched in a mass to attack Gibraltar by sea and land: or that the FIRST CONSUL OF FRANCE! and all his MYRMIDONS! had fairly embarked in flat-bottomed boats, AND SAILED TO FIGHT THE CHANNEE FLEET! AND INVADE ENGLAND! and he will understand perfectly the kind of pleasure to which I allude. Even in these hard times, JOHN BULL himself would rejoice to be so attacked by his worst enemies. Ruined as he is by the war! drowned in debt! pillaged with taxes! oppressed with grievances! pining (as usual) with apprehensions!

petent judge in this matter : He was not only “ witty in himself, but the cause of wit in others,” as you are to me, or as Joe Miller is in regard to you : I begin now to perceive the misapprehension by which you have been betrayed into an error : You had remarked that Swift and Voltaire, and Rabelais, and even Shakespeare himself, while they were acknowledged as the greatest wits, were the most voluminous authors ; and you unfortunately imagined they must be witty in every page ; as the clown, when brought into the company of a celebrated wit, expected to hear in every word a jest ! Dear Sir, your mistake amazes me : Did you really imagine that you would acquire this kind of celebrity by writing five quarto volumes, crammed full of wit ! tales, jests, proclama-

### SOMETHING GRAND.

hensions ! tormented all day by excisemen ! haunted all night by schedules of income-tax, longer than his rent-roll ! beset on all hands ! devoured by his servants, threatened by his foes, bullied by his friends ! a host of DEMOCRATS and REFORMERS, armed with PAMPHLETS, PIKES, DAGGERS, AND GUILLOTINES IN HIS FRONT ! myriads of VOLUNTEER INFANTRY, with fixed bayonets, in his rear ! vast clouds of YEOMANRY CAVALRY, sword in hand, ready to charge him on his right ! MOUNTAINS of volunteer artillery, with lighted PORTFIRES ! *just ready* to open on his left ! growling at the scarcity of BELLY-TIMBER ! not half relishing the proclamation ! and the economy of eatables which it recommends ! making endless wry-faces at the NICE PICKLED HERRINGS which his sister PEG sent him up twice a-week, just by way of a whet ! quite desperate at the rigid economy of malt, and the shameful waste of river-water, which are now practised by the BREWERS ! seeing no prospect of any thing before him in this world but DEATH AND TAXES,

*and*



tions, anecdotes, nothing but wit? Your misapprehension in this matter, reminds me of that of an ingenious Dutch Gentleman, with whom Peregrine Pickle became acquainted in Amsterdam, in a Spiel-house, where the conversation turning, as natural it should do, on works of genius, the Dutch Gentleman, laying his hand with great earnestness and gravity on an immense Cheshire cheese, said, "Me do not know vat is boetry, mine broder be von great boet, he have wrought an book as dick as all des cheese."

Wit was your first great object, your second was to involve the plainest matters in confusion, to maintain, throughout all your volumes along with a seeming carelessness, a studied perplexity, which, while it concealed your purposes, kept wonder alive.

### SOMETHING GRAND.

*and doubtful* WHICH TO TAKE FIRST! even in the midst of all his calamities, JOHN BULL ("Alas! poor gentleman, his wits begin to unsettle,") would cheerfully put his hand once more in his almost empty pocket, and pay t'other fifty millions, just to have the pleasure of reading a Gazette Extraordinary, containing the account of these two attacks. The pamphlet of Mr John Bell, and the vote of thanks of the Royal College of Surgeons to him for it, were such an attack, and such a Gazette to me.

*Gregory's Memorial* 2d. p. 25.

### SOMETHING MORE MAGNIFICENT.

"Thus our noble Commander in Chief, Lord Moira, will immediately bestride his Arabian courser, and gallop to the spot, to reconnoitre in person, me, and my partner, Mr Trotter, the undertaker

Sentence by sentence, joke by joke, every man could understand your memorial (with the help of recollection, if he had read Joe Millar and the other original authors from which it was compiled;) but the design of the whole, no mind, I believe, except your own, has been great enough to comprehend.

“ Abstract, perplex, distract, entangle,  
And lay perpetual trains to wrangle :”

For this were you born; in this you must for ever excel; in this occupation you are condemned to pass your existence.

You owe, Sir, and should be grateful for it, to the fortunate existence of a great surgical copartnery in this city, and a great surgical cabal in the Infirmary, the happy occasion of improving in that department of literature in which you were born to excel;

### SOMETHING MORE MAGNIFICENT.

undertaker and upholsterer! But, like Theseus, when permitted to witness the death of Oedipus! will cover his eyes with his——hands! unable to endure the horrors of the sight!” Alas! Alas! “ Which would be enough to freeze the last drop of Plantagenet blood in his veins.” Alas! Alas!

“ Then, greater than conquerors, by a bold retreat, the whole army” (What? Plantagenets and all? Alas! Alas!) “ will march off, like the 10,000 Greeks led by Xenophon, without looking behind them till they shall have gained at least six days march upon us, (Mr Trotter and me) not halting to hold a council of war, till they shall have taken a strong position on the highest pinnacle of BENNEVIS! and thrown up a few redoubts, and other FIELD WORKS!” (on the top of Bennevis?) “ just to prevent a  
coup.

that in which the turbulence and confusion of your notions, the intricacies of your loquacious and colloquial stile, the vortiginous, perplexed, and distracting irrelevancy of fact, argument, and illustration; the clumsy caperings of drollery, and diffused perplexity of syllogism, hitherto imagined to be the most brief and conclusive of all methods! are advantages inestimable, in which no living being, taught or untaught, could ever pretend to be your rival. There is indeed a pretender, who is described by the author of the *Rolliad* in the following terms; but nothing can persuade me that he can be in any degree a rival: "His mind possesses unlimited powers of inglutition, and his ideas adhere to each other with such tenacity, that whenever his memory is stimulated

### SOMETHING MORE MAGNIFICENT.

coup-de-main on our part. But, it will soon appear either in General Orders, or in the Court Gazette.

ἸΖευς δὲ Θεῶν ἀγορὴν ποιητατο τερπικερανιος

Ἀκροτατη κορυφῇ πολυδερειαδος Ὀυλυμποιο

Ἀυτος δὲ σφ' ἀγορευει, Θεοι δ' ἅμα παντες ἀκουου.

"Then, while his followers were COOLING THEIR HEELS! and sharing the FEAST of SHELLS! for want of BETTER BELLY TIMBER! and listening to the PIBROCHS! of my learned brother," (Dr Gregory's learned brother!) "the PROFESSOR of the bagpipe in the Isle of Sky! Their noble chief will be ferried over by a SECOND-SIGHTED CHARON! and his wife, of course, a witch, to the Isle of STAFFA! and descend into the cave of Fingal; and after listening to a song, with ACCOMPANIMENTS! from the shade Ossian, will! be admitted to a *teté-a-teté* with the shade of our Scottish hero! from whom he *will* learn many edifying particulars

of

by any powerful interrogatory, it not only discharges a full answer to the individual question, but a prodigious flood of collateral knowledge, derived from such copious and repeated infusions, as no common skull would be capable of containing."

There is a certain description of innocent and inoffensive beings, whose flattest name I shall not use on the present occasion, equally remarkable for incredible memories and inordinate appetites: I confess that I am never forced to read a succession of your tales and jokes, and other illustrations; nor reflect on the disorderly appetite which the heterogeneous collection of odd materials, engrossed in your Memorials, implies, without recollecting the fate of one of those innocent beings, who, with more appetite than digestion, swallowed what-

### SOMETHING MORE MAGNIFICENT.

of the fate awaiting him in these eventful times and *horida bella*, all which will appear to more advantage in the heroic verse of some future Blackmore, who shall write the *Iatrothanatonicia*, *than they* can do! in my humble prose."

"But in the meantime, on his return, he will find ME AND MY DREAD PARTNER in the middle of his impregnable camp, and very busy, for

"Mors et fugacem prosequitur virum  
Nec parcit imbellis juventa,  
Poplitibus timidoque tergo."

Oh how admirable and pleasing the refinements of a classical education, which enables us to adorn even the most exquisite compositions!

"Our

ever presented itself : no article how odd soever could present itself to him but he would devour it. The dissection of this Natural is mentioned in the Philosophical Transactions. Upon opening his stomach, they found that he had been in the habit of devouring all the useless and singular things that came in his way ; boys marbles, pipe-stroppers, thimbles, and shoe-buckles, sleeve-buttons and brass beads, old nails and old halfpence, rusty keys, legs of compasses, and brass padlocks ! He perished, poor innocent soul, in his voracious and gluttonous attempt upon a large pair of scissars, of which unpropitious and unyielding morsel he died : a proof, at least, that though he had not the same propensities, " he was made of the same stuff that other men are."

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### SOMETHING MORE MAGNIFICENT.

" Our bravest admirals ! when sent to defend our shores, will not venture to anchor on this coast, when thy descry our terrific standard," &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) JAMES GREGORY, M.D.  
*Professor of Practice of Physic in the  
 University of Edinburgh.*

But when argument and poetry fail, the Memorialist can descend, like ordinary writers, to Facts.

### FACTS.

*Authentic Facts concerning the Drunkenness, Brutality, and  
 Incapacity of the Infirmary Surgeons.*

#### *1st Theory.*

" To moisten the clay ! is certainly one of the most important duties which a rational being owes to himself. Accordingly,  
 I have



Much as I have been struck with this singularity in your constitution of mind, this undistinguishing, insatiable appetite, without the slightest signs of digestion, I think it friendly and becoming a professional brother, to remind you, that it so far resembles a bodily disorder, that you should become a little careful of your increasing malady. In Nosology we call that loathsome disease of inordinate appetite, and voracious inglutition with imperfect concoction, and indigested excretions, a LIENTERY ! and you really seem to me to labour under a lienteriy of the MIND.

This is a state of the faculties which had disturbed the commonwealth of ancient Rome, as much as it afflicts the literati of modern times ; and it seems

## FACTS.

### *1st General Theory.*

I have now and then seen some of those VERY HONEST FELLOWS OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS visiting their patients, when they had moistened their clay so effectually, that they could neither speak articulately, nor walk or stand without staggering, and when they must have been equally unfit to judge what ought to be done, or to perform any surgical operation that might have been needed."

J. GREGORY.

### *2d Particular Fact.*

" One of these was particularly distinguished from ALL THE OTHER HONEST FELLOWS of this College, by his extraordinary care of the surgeons instruments. He even insisted on having, while he attended in rotation, a separate key to the press in which they are kept, under the immediate care of the surgeons clerk, or house-surgeon ; and, by help of that key, used to pay frequent

strange that a scholar like you, should mistake your own case, or suppose that a perpetual discharge of individual indigested ideas, is either a natural or a healthy condition. Why this, Sir, is plainly mistaking “loquacity of eloquence.” “Candidus non invenuste solet dicere, aliud est ELOQUENTIAM, aliud LOQUENTIAM; eloquentia vix uni aut alteri, imo, si Antonio credimus nemini: Hæc vero quam Candidus loquentiam appellat, MULTIS atque etiam IMPUDENTISSIMIS, cuique maxime contingit.”

I have not found Sir, that my attentions to your health have been at all well received; yet I will not allow myself to be discouraged by your ingratitude: In the beginning of your malady I proposed, as an example, fit for your imitation, the seclusion and the discipline of Frank Folly. “The Memorial of

### FACTS.

frequent visits to them. The reason of this extraordinary attention was not known for some time, but at last the MATRON discovered that he had a patient in that PRESS! in the last stage of a consumption! to whom his visits were paid; namely, the BRANDY BOTTLE!!!”

J. GREGORY.

### 3d General Observation.

“Though none of his brethren, at least that ever I heard of, were *supposed* to visit the brandy bottle privately; yet SEVERAL OF THEM occasionally did so in public, *at broad noon!* without the smallest reserve or delicacy! as I (Dr James Gregory) can testify, from my most certain knowledge; for many a time have I seen SEVERAL OF THEM prime with a good dram of brandy, just before they went to the theatre, for the final consultation and operation on some UNHAPPY PATIENT! But I must do them the justice

to

FRANK FOLLY, humbly sheweth :\* That he hath put himself into the Infirmary, in regard he is sensible of a certain sort of rustic mirth, which renders him unfit for polite conversation !

“ That he intends to prepare himself, by abstinence and thin diet, to be one of the company.

“ That at present he comes into a room as if he were an express from abroad.

“ That he has chosen an apartment with a matted antichamber, to practise motion without being heard.

“ That he bows, talks, drinks, eats, and helps himself before a glass, to learn to act with moderation.

“ That by reason of luxuriant health, he is oppressive to persons of composed behaviour.

“ That he is also weaning himself from his cane.

“ That when he has learnt to live without his said cane, he will wait on the company.”

I find that, jealous of the disposition in which I had advised this, you resented it wholly on the score of the *spretæ injuria formæ* : Be assured, Sir, I

\* Spectator, No. 429.

### FACTS.

to say, that they drank their BRANDY most scientifically out of cupping glasses !!

JAMES GREGORY.”

When Reasoning, Poetry, Eloquence, and Irony, fail to persuade, what should the disappointed logician conclude, but that the obduracy of such a swinish herd proceeds from their being possessed by an evil spirit ? and that

THE

meant no personal disrespect ; and if I hinted at any disorderly motions, or strange carriage of the body, I mentioned it in words which a much more delicate judge of politeness (Addison) than either you or I did not think rude, and merely in allusion to the corresponding condition of mind. The illustrious author of that institution, the Hospital ! did not mean to degrade himself into a dancing-master. He had no intention of teaching mere postures and gestures of the body, but alluded to the wholesome discipline of the intellect.

It is well-known, that to the mind, as to the body, we apply sometimes sedatives, sometimes stimulants, and that with those of an obstreperous temper, it is not unusual to recommend a course of studies in Law, Logic, or Metapysics, or Mathema-

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### THE DEVIL HAD ENTERED INTO THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

“The most obvious account of so strange a phenomenon is this : It appears, from their conduct and their printed Memorial, that about the time when that bargain was made, the *Devil had taken full possession of a LARGE MAJORITY of the Corporation of Surgeons!!!* and that he had endowed them plenteously with *his own MAIGNANT SPIRIT!* Further, it appears, by what passed thirty years after, in the course of the long contest between the Managers of the Infirmary and the Corporation of Surgeons, that the Devil still kept possession of the latter, or at least of a great majority of them, as his own peculiar flock. Even so lately as 1792, when Dr Duncan made an attempt to get that horrible abuse corrected, against which I remonstrate, it is plain, from the “*terrible noise*” which some of them began to make, that the Devil was still in them, and by no means *disposed to go out of them!* Now, these things being so, it is very natural to suppose, that the  
same

tics, till the natural irritations are subdued. You have, indeed, acknowledged, that you had applied yourself to all these studies, but I fear very unsuccessfully, for you comport yourself, to my apprehension, like one just in the middle of some ill-advised experiment of this kind, and trample and plunge among Metaphysics and Mathematics, like one, who having by his Physician been prescribed moderate and wholesome exercise, set himself to walk in a coat of mail, to toil in a fulling mill, or to dance in wooden shoes.

Lord Bacon draws an inference of the “possible improvement of the human genius to an unknown degree, from the extraordinary flexibility of the body which may be attained to by use, as in tumblers,

### THE DEVIL HAD ENTERED INTO THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

same evil spirit still continued in them, and had **DESCENDED UNIMPAIRED** from Mr Kennedy to some of his worthy successors; just as we read in Scripture, that when a great prophet of old was taken up into heaven in a chariot of fire, his spirit, as well as his mantle, descended to his humble follower.

“It is so reasonable, on all occasions, to impute every thing that is peculiarly bad, to the immediate agency of the Devil, and this account of the matter, in the present case, is so obvious and plausible, that every body would admit it at once as satisfactory and certain, were it not for some considerations which I have already stated. But these have so much weight, that they make me doubt, or more than doubt, of that most natural account of the business, and suggest to me another explanation of it, which I am convinced is the true reason.

The



rope-dancers, posture-masters, mimics, and buffoons." You seem to have interpreted this figure too literally. In place of improving your intellect by the exercise of reason, as others improve their body by wholesome toil, you seem to have been occupied in subjecting your mind to such ludicrous postures, grimaces, and distortions, as to have much disfigured your intellect, and produced an utter incapacity for all the respectable and decent employments of life; and, in short, to dance through your scene upon the stage, like one of Bayes's actors, whom he instructs in dancing their dance, "to dance like horsemen."

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The Devil having thus entered into the College of Surgeons, and resided substantially in that body corporate, it was most charitable of this same physician to give

#### A WARNING TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS, NOT TO BITE ONE ANOTHER.

"To prevent mistakes, I beg it may be observed, that this is metaphorical, and not meant as an invitation to them, *literally to eat one another*; for that is the very last thing I should wish them *to do*. On the contrary, if I thought my advice could have any weight *upon* them, I should take the liberty strongly to *caution* them *all* against even *biting* one another, on any account or *pretence whatever*, especially during their present state of exasperation and acrimony: for I have good reason to think, that  
even

## LETTER V.

Of the Design of this celebrated Memorial of Dr GREGORY'S—  
the Uses he makes of Calumny,—and all the Practical Purposes  
of his Intrigue in the College of Surgeons.

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SIR,

I cannot think of reviewing the design and purpose of this Memorial, without reflecting on the theory of your life ; for when you plainly declined the authority of your Father, and abandoned his maxims, you must have formed for yourself, or adopted from others, a system more favourable to your hopes. It appears to me, that among your philosophical propensities, you had been drawn aside by the authority of the great Lord Verulam, to believe, “ that there certainly can be no two more

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## A WARNING, &amp;c.

even the Ormskirk medicine and the salt water would not prevent the fatal effects of the bite ; I means its effects on the *biter*, not on the *bitten*. Of this danger, which at present perhaps they little dream of, they will soon be sensible, if they will consider with due attention the following aphorism of Hippocrates :” &c. &c.

Page 242.

When Argument, Poetry, Eloquence, and Irony fail, and that the fear of the Devil is no longer before their eyes, then there is no resource, that College, whether Medical or Chirurgical, which resists these effusions of Dr Gregory's eloquence, must straightway be HANGED !

FIRST.

fortunate properties, than to have a little of the fool, and not too much of the honest !” \* You forget, that maxims such as these were not the causes, but the ruin, of that man’s greatness : Perhaps you recollected also, a shrewd observation of your own, “ that many great and illustrious families have abounded in knaves, and others in fools and madmen, from generation to generation ; and that in some families, the fool and the knave are so exquisitely and happily blended, that it is impossible to say which prevails.”

The contemplation of this subtle combination of knavish folly, crazy sense, and careless wisdom ! the antic disposition which it might be necessary to assume, seems to have given you particular delight. The theory occurred to you, while making the eulogium of your own predecessors, and you have been been at pains to improve the dispositions you thought you inherited.

#### FIRST.—THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OUGHT TO BE HANGED.

“ They will find that the sad dilemma stands thus. If their assertions are *false*, they themselves must be INFAMOUS ! this I presume they will not dispute ; but if their assertions are *true*, they must be still more infamous and odious, and certainly OUGHT ALL TO BE HANGED ! for their own conduct, and the share which they have had, both actively, in those HORRIBLE ATROCITIES !”

“ If what they have asserted be *true*, then I and my colleagues, especially the Clinical Professors, and the Managers of the Infirmary, must be infamous and odious, and must ALL DESERVE TO BE HANGED ! ! !”

\* *Vide Gregory’s Memorial, 2d.*

SECOND.

Nothing but these “two fortunate properties” can explain the theory of your life! There is in this charitable Memorial nothing that they do not explain!—Your disputes had been on metaphysics only, and you seemed to delight in a philosophical retirement, improving in professional studies, and virtuous reflections, till the slow fame of your acquirements, should bring you into esteem: But you were looking out sharp and keen for the side-winds and currents which might carry you out into the stream of life.—Right, Sir.—You did right: “There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken in the flood leads on to fortune; neglected! all the voyage of their lives is bound in shallows:” You took the advantage of the stream to go out upon your gainful voyage, but thought

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## SECOND.

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS ARE ALL LYING ABOMINABLY, AND DESERVE TO BE HANGED! FOR THE SAME CRIME OF CONTUMACY AGAINST THE SAID ILLUSTRIOUS PROFESSOR.

“From the nature and terms of the accusation, and from the manner in which it has been preferred, it is plain, THAT EITHER I OR MY ACCUSERS MUST HAVE BEEN LYING ABOMINABLY. But this obvious dilemma comprehends and expresses only a very small part of the truth. It is equally certain, that either I or my accusers, *and a LARGE PORTION OF MY BRETUREN, WHO ARE OF COURSE TO BE JUDGES on this occasion, must have been lying abominably, and acting most knavishly for more than three years past.!!!*”

The crimes of KNAVERY and FALSEHOOD, of CHEATING and LYING abominably, are perpetually working in the learned Profes-

sor's

not of the storm which might wreck your spoil-encumbered bark.

When men of real innate dignity are unawares push'd into adventures likely to tarnish their good name, and talents become thus the prey of covetous cunning men, we lament more sincerely over such a sacrifice, than even over hopeful talents blasted by neglect. But your talents, though utterly lost to your profession, are of a kind not much to be lamented, nor is the seduction of your virtues to be mourned over. All the virtues and talents you ever possessed were at this period put to their genuine use: You sat probably long meditating this Memorial, not without consulting with those of the OLDER SURGEONS to whom you express, on all practicable occasions, so deep a sense of gra-

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sor's imagination, accompanied most naturally with many terrors about transmigrating to another world, and of the DEVIL! and of being HANGED HIMSELF! and these work and boil so in his imagination, that they create, amidst the confusion of his thoughts, worse, and more natural fears. For example:

#### A JOURNEY TO THE RESIDENCE OF THE FORMIDABLE DR WILLIS.

"If I were (says the Professor) to SAY ALL THAT I THINK! on this point, (I believe he might have said on any point,) I should expect that some of my professional brethren would immediately put ME IN A STRAIT WAISTCOAT! and send ME OFF POST TO DR WILLIS!" \*

Why, very likely, Sir! he is a wise physician who thus understands his own case.

\* Gregory's Letter, p. 89.



titude: You laboured more than a year printing this precious volume before it appeared: You were the man on whose power and prowess a party relied: You were the centre of all the scandals, and all the agitations of this intrigue in the Hospital: You were not duped by the cunning of others, to become a party in this enterprise, of which you well deserved the fruit: for,

“ You lent the mob your arm to shake the tree.”

You began your career by taking under your peculiar care the poor of the Hospital, as if a spirit of pure benevolence had hurried you into the active scenes of life: But there were singular consequences connected with your patronage of GOOD SURGERY, and your enmity to YOUNGER SURGEONS!

#### DELICATE AND EXQUISITE MORCEAUX.

When the Professor would infuse more than usual spirit and elegance into his graver reasoning, he never allows his genius to be repressed by any paultry considerations of delicacy; nay, what is wonderful, and shows the extent of his genius, he can make the most indelicate ribbaldry contribute to the illustration of his “ Sound Logical Reasoning.” Thus:

##### *Definition of a Pretence!*

“ Every body knows, that by a *pretence* is meant, not only a false reason or argument, but one publicly declared, in order to conceal something *worse*, more disgraceful, and less fit to be known or avowed: as for example, “ Hold your tongue, Sir,” said a great orator, in an altercation with one of inferior genius,

N 2

“ don’t

useful practical results ! which claim some degree of attention.

What could attract you towards men so little distinguished for learning, liberality, or any thing but practice? Was it, that you might enter into a society, where your talents could encounter no rude unmannerly opposition, where learning was but a subject of distant admiration, and skill in metaphysics, acknowledged with modest homage? These circumstances might no doubt be most gratifying to you, but still where there had been no fellowship in education, "no consonancy of youth, no obligation of ever-preserved love," no common subjects of study or of conversation, a close indissoluble friendship must excite suspicion; we enquire, but in vain, for the natural causes of attachment, and are apt

#### DELICATE AND EXQUISITE MORCEAUX.

"don't we all know that your wife, under *pretence* of keeping a bawdy-house, is a receiver of stolen goods."

*Memorial*, p. 233.

#### *Another.*

"There lived, and perhaps still lives, in that gay city, a genteel and elegant couple, a perfect pattern of conjugal virtue and happiness; bating only that the husband was somewhat promiscuous in his amours, and the lady rather too unguarded in the distribution of her favours. Of course, it came to pass, once on a time, that the lady found her health considerably disordered, and in so particular a manner, that she was sure her husband must know it, and that his own could not be in a much better condition. Being a woman of sense, and spirit, and address, she took an opportunity

to suppose, that even the ordinary subjects of conversation would be soon exhausted, that in such society, your high talents would find no excitement, no subject of emulation, no victorious and gratifying debates! But you sought abroad for objects of opposition and contention; and found in those closer and more intimate alliances, friendly intercourse, and substantial support, and facilities and reciprocities of a tempting and pleasing complexion.

Professional connexions, such as we now allude to, are not subject to capricious changes: They are not of the nature of those intimacies which are at their highest growth, and ready to burst, as soon as the talents of each party come to a natural balance, they are such as may graft and grow and ripen for ever.

### DELICATE AND EXQUISITE MORCEAUX.

portunity to remonstrate with him, pretty sharply, on the injury that he had done her. He, being a thoroughly well-bred man, as well as a most affectionate husband, heard her out with the most polite and patient attention; and when she had done, “My dear,” said he, “that there is a Pox in the family is pretty plain; but as to how it came into it,—I believe we had better let that point rest!!!”

*Ibidem.*

This favourite subject is exquisitely treated of by the Professor in his Poems!—Poems? Yes, gentle reader, a VOLUME OF POEMS!—of EPIGRAMS, circulated like all the other proofs of his exquisite talents, GRATIS! Under which *pretence*, (we now have a very intelligible definition of a *pretence*,) it is laid on the toilettes and  
tables

Your principles of friendship, far from being absurdly philosophical or phantastical, were such as men of the soberest sense and of the soundest calculating faculties, could not but approve. You had begun to be a-weary of this tedious trade of a professed Philosopher, when you made that fortunate discovery of the uses which a College of Surgeons might be turned to! and the many unthought-of purposes, which a Copartnery of Surgeons might be made to serve.—Your exultation at discovering a whole farrow, must have been as animated, and your expectations as pleasing, as those of the Pious Æneas, when he discovered the big white sow under the tree :

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#### DELICATE AND EXQUISITE MORCEAUX.

tables of many a respectable family in this city. Be not impatient, gentle reader, the poem shall be produced, by and by. I am incapable of defrauding the Professor of any praise so DEARLY EARNED."

#### *Another.*

" I do not remember to have heard of any one instance of a man, who, after once failing in probity and veracity, EVER AFTER ACQUIRED OR REGAINED THE CHARACTER OF A GENTLEMAN ! If Lord Moira himself ! were to do so, I apprehend he must set like stars that rise no more ! In this respect, the character of a gentleman ! is almost (why this pitiful mental reservation, Sir ? Say altogether ! ) as delicate as the chastity of a woman. " Si paulum summo decessit, vergit ad imum."—or as the swinish vulgar express it,—" ONCE A WHORE, AND ALWAYS A WHORE, BY THE COURTESY OF ENGLAND !!! " \*

WELCOME HOME ! most worthy Professor of Medicine and  
Metaphysics !

\* *Gregory's Letter, page 90.*

“ ————— ingens inventa sub ilicibus sus  
 Triginta capitum fœtus enixa jacebit.  
 Is locus urbis erit, requies ea certa laborum,  
 Nec tu mensarum morsus horesce futuros  
 Fata viam invenient, aderitque vocatus Apollo.”

I doubt not the discovery has to you, as to that wandering hero, proved prophetic,

“ ————— requies ea certa laborum,  
 Nec tu mensarum morsus horesce futuros.”

In that wise and well informed society, you learnt to dispense with your father's precepts, and to form a more liberal system for yourself; to reject the studied and stately dignity of the old school; to write,

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Metaphysics ! welcome home. “ Once a GENTLEMAN and always a Gentleman, by the courtesy of SCOTLAND !”

#### DECISION OF THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS, ON THE 13th OF SEPTEMBER 1808.

“ THE College met at one o'clock afternoon, and almost every Member present delivered his opinion at considerable length. Some Members spoke at great length repeatedly. About midnight a vote was put,—*Approve of the Resolutions proposed, or Not.* It carried, Approve, by seven to three. One Member having some doubts, with regard to the propriety and legality of the mode of procedure, declined to vote.”

“ The Sentence of the College, therefore, found, That Dr JAMES GREGORY HAD BEEN GUILTY OF A WILFUL AND DELIBERATE VIOLATION OF TRUTH !”

Welcome home ! most worthy and illustrious Professor !  
 “ Once a Gentleman and always a Gentleman, by the courtesy of EVERY COUNTRY ON EARTH !”

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to speak, and to act familiarly. The society which you now cultivated, had felt the practical benefits of conducting their professional duties on a Liberal and Extensive scale! not individually, but collectively! Inspired by original genius, you added so many important improvements to their system, as to have almost the merit of an inventor! the adding to a copartnery of six or seven Surgeons, a pamphleteering physician, thoroughly skilled in all the arts of practice, and to that physician a partner! The adding to the ordinary arts of whispering and tale-bearing, the more refined invention of ponderous volumes of calumny, distributed gratis! The adding to the avowed monopoly of private practice, a secret cabal by which the entire possession of a public Hospital might be secured! Above all, the exquisite invention of ensuring superiority to the very rascals and runners of such a society, by a general proscription of talents, were contrivances worthy of your genius! Such measures were never organized into one great revolutionary movement, till you took your seat in those councils, and could never have been accomplished without your help.

You then became the sun of this planetary system, and looked abroad upon satellites and lesser stars innumerable; revolving at various distances in their respective orbits; reflecting mutually heat, and light, and splendour; and leaning towards you, their glorious and resplendent centre. When we regard the disgregated and worthless atoms, of which this new world was composed, and the powers by which

they were attracted to their natural centre, and to observe the new and harmonie movements they began at this period to assume, we cannot entertain a doubt that the Gregorian system, with its attractions and gravitations ! its stars, planets, and satellites ! its nodes and its eclipses ! will be as much the subject of admiration and wonder in the medeal, as the Newtonian has been in the physical world.

It was while brooding over this ehaos, separating light from darkness, and setting its discordant elements in order, that all your native energies were unfolded : You blundered out with your usual precipitancy, the seerets of your consultations \*. Your consultations related purely, simply, and charitably, to the reform of the Hospital, but incidentally they involved inquiries into the character and conduct of the younger surgeons ! Eventually, it appears, that the most malevolent tales had been the subject of your private conferences, and the nature of these tales betray the sources of your information, which are entirely worthy of the cause.

Secret inquisition and premeditated persecution, were thus organised, and the threats which your several quartos have so emphatieally conveyed, were not spared in private conversation, wherever the Infirmary, or Surgery, could be made the subject of declamation.

\* “ In the course of the last twelve months, I have had *occasion* to learn the sentiments of several *respectable members of the College*, on the point in question ; I have found them to be the same with my own.” Page 103.

All being thus cautiously prepared, and your Memorial eagerly expected by your friends, the auspicious and brilliant period of your professional machinations and literary career began. When I reflect on the exultation and applause with which your friends, your surgical friends, the chiefs and the elevés of that great and learned society with which you had allied yourself, witnessed the explosions of your wit; I cannot help recollecting, with a smile, the office very similar to your's, which was assigned by the old Elector of Brandenburg to his faithful friend JOHN. John was his Highness's confidential servant, privy counsellor, and machinist, with whom, it would appear, he had lived on very familiar terms, concerting, with the help of his counsel, all his little projects! In short, John's offices under the old Elector, bore a striking resemblance to your's under the late ELECTOR Benjamin.

The court of Berlin, though addicted to ceremony, was not fastidious in its amusements. "They were so stupid, (says Frederick \*) as to confound ceremonies with politeness, magnificence with dignity, pedantry with learning, and the clownish flatness of buffoons with the ingenious sallies of wit." But they chiefly delighted in fire-works, and John the engineer had the charge of this department. When John and the Elector had projected any scheme of this kind; and when all was ready, the

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\* I use here the words of the late King of Prussia, in his History of the House of Brandenburg.

Elector got up into a turret of the castle, and putting his head out of a dormer window, cried out to the engineer, " Now, John, set fire as soon as I have whistled."

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Few were ever blest with such happy talents as you were; for all that was vindictive or ridiculous in the tasks assigned you. The properties of your stile, and the propensities of your mind, were admirably suited to such an occupation. I never reflect on the following sentence, without wishing that it were allowable at least to translate, if not to apply, the rude reproaches which, though they passed current in the severe republic of Rome, will hardly be relished in our politer age: "*Os confusum, hesitans lingua, tardissima inventio, nihil denique præter ingenium insanum!*" they present a bold and animated picture of an orator of the true revolutionary spirit. But why should I hesitate? You are a scholar, a liberal and a learned one: "*Os confusum, hesitans lingua, tardissima inventio, nihil denique præter ingenium insanum, et tamen eo impudentia ipsoque illo furore pervenit, ut a plurimis orator habeatur; itaque mirifice Catonis illud de oratore in hunc e contrario vertit: "Orator est vir malus dicendi imperitus."*—"A distracted visage, a babbling tongue, a barren wit, and no one function suiting, except a crazy intellect! He yet, by impudence and very frenzy, persuaded numbers, that he was an orator! exhibiting in his own person a

surprising parody of Cato's definition : " An orator is a bad man, ignorant of eloquence."

You were in the year of God 1800, never before, and never since, (though since there have been some very tragical scenes exhibited) roused to a state of distraction, on account of the incapacity of the younger surgeons, and the sufferings of the poor. When you became the voluntary advocate of this sacred cause, how did it come to pass that you did not follow those winning and gentle ways which goodness could not miss? Why did you not use the melting tones of charity, and bring forth those pleadings which might delude the judgment and win the heart? The very mendicant knows the language in which he can tell his woful tale the most impressively; but you have a mind so little used to affections of this nature, that you know not even how to feign the passion you meant to inspire!

You designed, forsooth, no more but a needful reform! You were impartial, just, and charitable! You were the voluntary supporter of the Managers, the voluntary advocate of the poor! But, was a quarto volume, printed and distributed gratis, the simple means of instructing the managers in their duty? Was defamation and calumny essential to reform? Were levity, indecency, scurrility, the best fruits of your charity? Was traducing the younger, and praising the older surgeons, any kindly tokens of the reform that was approaching? Were cabals in the Infirmary, intrigues in the College of Surgeons, and a total revolution, accompanied with a re-



jection of those who had hitherto performed the painful, but instructive duties of the hospital, essential to reform? Were scenes of wild contention and open warfare the unavoidable preludes to reform? Your Memorial, and your actions, bear not the character of charity; but remind me, rather, of a shrewd remark made by one who was suspected to have very happy propensities for revolutionary movements, but who would have revolted from such charities as you delight in. "Who," says Godwin, "would think of enlightening his pupils in the truths of geometry by transports of rage?" Who would propose to plead the cause of the poor in the unchristian language of calumny? When I see a man such as you are, so heartless, and so cold to all true sympathy, affect a deep interest in the condition of the poor, I cannot but regard it as the worst of mockeries, and cannot forget, that next to the misfortune of wanting the warm feelings of benevolence, the sin of affecting them is the most shocking.

It is the nature, Sir, of calumny, to create the faults it cannot find. It was long suspected in the College of Surgeons, that there existed a conspiracy,—not a rude and petulant warfare of the young and aspiring against the old and respectable part of that society—but of the old against the young! Of those who had wealth, influence, and interest, on their side! Of those who had every thing to lose, if talents were allowed to prosper, or diligence in study to be acknowledged as a just claim to public approbation! who threatened to procure, by their influence,

a new system of administration in the Surgical department of the hospital, for the avowed purpose of EXCLUSION ! not REFORM ! who cared not what description of persons obtained the title of surgeons to the Infirmary, so that they were delivered, from the fear of rivalry, and the thralldom of science, improving in a degree which ill corresponded with their early education and fixed habits.

Then you entered upon the scene in a character selected for yourself. "The Drawcansir of Medical Literature" prepared to play his part in a College Surgeons, where he had no seat, and where any other physician would have felt shame and sorrow, if his name, his interests, his politics, or his alliances, had become any way a subject of debate. On the table of that College was your Memorial, "big with the elements of strife," thrown down for discussion, as if it had been the work of a fellow member.—You brought into question the dearest interests of the College:—You assimilated yourself with a party, wrote for a party, associated yourself openly with a party: The spirit of party, next to the spirit of calumny, was then distinctly seen to be "your vital principle, to which every natural action might be justly referred : " With diabolical subtilty you excited those jealousies which nothing could ever appease ! watched every motion of a College of which you were not a member ! had your spies and informers to deliver up to you their daily reports of mingled lies and truth ! received regular notices of every motion, of every vote, of the name of every individual surgeon who gave his vote ! and reported

in your printed Memorial, all the proceedings of a College of which you were not a member ! and, then,—reproached the profession with angry debates and unruly passions, and internal warfare, of which you were the cunning inventor and sole cause. \* You seemed to exult over the weakness of human passions, as if you had been yourself exempted, while you were triumphing with matchless depravity, in the full accomplishment of a cabal unworthy of your calling :—

“ Tu potes unanimes armare in prælia Fatres  
Atque odiis versare domos.”——

On the table of the Royal College was laid a quarto Memorial, distributed industriously the whole world ;

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\* The temper and disposition of this DRAWCANSIR of Medical Literature, and TRUMPETER of Medical Warfare, the ungentlemanlike rancorous temper of this man, are best portrayed by the following extract from the Second Memorial :

“ As I should be very sorry to lead any of them into an error, which might be fatal, I think it right to warn them that, within these two years, I heard a very RESPECTABLE SENIOR MEMBER of their College DECLARE LOUDLY in the OPEN STREET, so that I am sure he did not mean it to be a secret ! that if it came to a *Pugnam* at any of their meetings, he was resolved to seize by the legs the smallest Fellow of their College, and to use him as a club or bludgeon to defend himself, and annoy his enemies. A most horrible expedient certainly : worse than whipping them with scorpions ; and I mention it here, that all whom it concerns may  
he

may, worse, distributed gratis to our fellow-citizens and friends; declaiming on the professional incapacity and cruel tempers of the YOUNGER SURGEONS: Your natural instinct taught you that you had but to invent and apply this odious name! The public would naturally infer that the young could not have EXPERIENCE;—you took upon yourself the task of proving that they wanted GOODNESS!—All the disorders of that charitable institution; all the misdeeds of the profession were charged upon the YOUNGER SURGEONS: their operations were likened to every thing horrible; their consultations to every thing ludicrous; and the apologues of the Tanner and the Butchers, the melancholy ox, the den of lions, and

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be on their guard, especially those who are under the middle size. A *Pugnum*, I understand, was the technical word, in their Royal College, for what is called in England a *Battle Royal*, and in Ireland, a *Roxe*. Whether it be derived from *Pugnus* a fist, or from *Pugna* a battle, *Grammatici certant, et adhuc sub judice lis est*. I humbly conjecture that it comes from them both: and Cicero himself declares, that he could not discover whether *Pugnus* was derived from *Pugna*, or *Pugna* from *Pugnus*.”

It is very natural for Dr James Gregory to mistake LOUDNESS for COURAGE; for his courage, like his wisdom, “Crieth out in the STREETS, and no man hearkeneth unto it.” He has not told us who this BIG LOUD gentleman is! But I am persuaded, let him be who he will, that when he talked so LOUD he was talking with a gentleman exactly of his own calibre: That his courage is exactly like Dr Gregory’s, especially in this, that when he has ONCE TALKED VERY LOUD, AND IN THE STREETS! the paroxysm is come to ITS NATURAL CRISIS!

the unrelenting Jew standing prepared with his knife and scales, to carve from his victim the forfeit of his bond ; all the obscenities and ribaldries of your disgusting colloquial stile, were appropriated to this charitable object.

Persecution thus established in our profession, no man was safe : With a mingled levity and wickedness, which hardly the words of scripture can express : you were “ as a madman who casteth fire-brands, arrows, and death, and sayeth, am not I in sport ? ” Every man who did not submit without a murmur to the designs of your cabal, was threatened with the utter ruin of his reputation, professional and moral ! Men dreading no ill, and conscious of the most persevering habits of study, and the most pure and honourable exertions, became the objects of pointed calumny ; and all under a certain age were involved in the general obloquy : And what was peculiarly shocking, the most studious and zealous, the most learned and able men, men in the prime of life, and respected for their various talents, were traduced under the name of younger surgeons, to make room for whom ? Not, as the abused public has been made to believe, for discreet, aged, or able men, but for the lumpish partners, sons, and dependents of your intriguing friends.

“ Was any one so foolish as succeed,  
On Envy’s altar he was doomed to bleed.”

You represented all that was odious, or rather all that might be so, in the character of the younger surgeons ; but you concealed all that made them objects worthy of protection or approbation, all that gave to



your cabal its true character of duplicity and cunning :—The term, younger surgeons, you should have remembered, implied men not yet strong in reputation, nor powerful in friends; not yet confirmed in the opinion of the world; not yet prepared to repel the shafts of calumny: Are these the men whom it became you to assail? Was it just to defame the younger part of your profession, to decry their talents, to discourage their ambition, and blast their hopes of being useful? To libel them with the odious names of young, inexperienced, cruel, regardless of the poor? To represent them as claiming, with wild vehemence, their inhuman privilege of “carving a reputation from the limbs of their fellow creatures?” It was, be assured, a most ungracious, most unnatural office, one which passion could never dictate, which only policy enjoined. Your affectation of liberal and generous sentiments, would have rather inclined you to sally forth in defence of enthusiasm, and talents struggling with opposition, to have risked contempt, and courted danger in their defence. But you were involved in degrading alliances; it was your appointed duty to traduce the younger surgeons; and by this one ungenerous act, you have fallen from your distinguished station, fallen a pernicious height—“ten masts attached make not the altitude.”

I am about to advance a theory, I confess, rather on general prejudice, than on any very substantial principles; and it is this: that your enmity to the younger surgeons bore a very natural relation, I believe I may say a just proportion, to your attachment

to the old.—Gentlemen deeply involved in practice, and who have not been fortunate in their early education; who see the world changing, and science improving, and younger men rising in every direction with new pretensions and claims on the public confidence, different from theirs, are destined, besides the irritations of the hour, to suffer more permanent anxieties. They cannot retrace the toilsome paths of study: Slenderly educated in their early years, their time is now wholly devoted to gainful pursuits:—No longer able to watch the progress of new experiments, or to keep pace with the improvements of the age, nothing seems to them so alarming as talents! nothing so odious as improvement. They sit wrapt up in sullen conceit; but in continual fear of revolutions of science, and invasions of knowledge: Their reputation, attained they know not how, but rather by arts than by sciences, soon comes to a dangerous height, then remains stationary: but if daily sapped and mined by improvements in their profession, and the growing fame and real skill of young and enterprising men! what must become of them? What fears must haunt them? What will they not promise, what will they not fulfil, to one willing to stand forth the calumniator of these younger and aspiring brethren; to one willing or able to traduce merit, and work the blessed works of reform, by chacing from the scenes of public competition and common resort all whose superior skill might prove a reproach to their stationary fame?

This theory may not satisfy your deep and metaphysical mind; but it is founded on a comparison of

the kinds of excitement produced by physical or moral causes.—Wants of every other kind impel men to strong exertions ; physical wants are of a craving nature, but poverty of mind produces no such excitement, and at advanced years are irreparable ! Ignorance was never yet known to create the appetite for knowledge, nor to aspire higher than to repress talent.

Entered upon your office, every energy of your mind was devoted to your duty ; the talents you had most cultivated were called to their legitimate use and you applied yourself to the business of defamation with that fervour of malice which outruns the pause of reason. Every younger surgeon was traduced ; every rival written down ; for every dangerous enterprise, in every moment of need, there was a ready defender ; and when we recollect the nature of those rewards your friends were most likely to bestow, we cannot help recollecting Burke's metaphor of " the cheap defence of nations." This seemed, indeed, to your friends, the cheap defence of the little talents they possessed. If those volumes of defamation were costly to you, still they were *cheap* to your friends, and *gratis* to all the world. They had the happiness to see their most dangerous rivals vigorously assailed, while they followed their peaceful avocations, and called you on all gainful occasions to their aid. He who survived whisperings or aspersions, or was stunned only by private calumnies, was felled with a ponderous quarto ! and at every blow you might say with the bloody Richard : " If he survive this, he's immortal !"

But your volumes are not all calumny : As you had reproofs for cruelty and ignorance, and threats for contumacy, you had rewards for virtue ; for such virtues, I mean, as you could relish : rewards, such as the virtues of your dearest friends deserve, the reward of your approbation !

Those rewards were dealt out with a liberal hand. You have written an Appendix to this precious Memorial, as courtly correspondents, when they would have any request or insinuation to stand particularly saillant, are careful to forget it in the letter, and to insert it in the postscript, with a few dashes. There was one young surgeon, whom you were at some pains to exculpate from the cruelty, ignorance, and intemperance, with which all his brethren were so deeply tinged. \* And after commemorating your

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#### ADVERTISEMENT.

\* “ The name which is mentioned in it in the most questionable manner is that of Mr GEORGE BELL (page 16.) He is mentioned as the attending surgeon ; and he is no longer so ; nor has he been so for near three months. He is one of the youngest members of the College of Surgeons, against whose promiscuous attendance by rotation I remonstrate so strongly. Some serious explanation of this is necessary ; ELSE IT MIGHT BE A CRUEL WRONG TO HIM, AND MIGHT BE UNDERSTOOD BY MANY PERSONS, TO IMPLY THAT I WISHED TO POINT HIM OUT PARTICULARLY AS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT WAS BAD IN THAT SYSTEM, AND AS THE OBJECT OF PUBLIC DISAPPROBATION AND CENSURE!!! (Oh precious hypocrisy !) Nothing can be farther from my intentions. Any such insinuation from me would in the first place be *a most ungrateful return to his father* for his very skilful professional assistance most zealously given to me and my family when we had much need of it ;  
and

manifold obligations to his father, you give just one reason, and it is a most memorable one for presuming talents in surgery, and sincerity in works of piety and charity, in the son; viz. first, your said obligations to his father! and, second, that he was his father's son! unless it is to be added, as a proof of high accomplishments, that he passed the first years of his life as his father's apprentice! the latter years as your clerk! You are silent on his talents as a Metaphysician, a Scholar, an Anatomist, a Chemist, and an accomplished gentleman. These were trivial acquirements. He had been your clerk! "he had been, during a course of clinical lectures, your clerk!" Yes, Sir, he was your clerk in the hospital; and shall I tell you what people not void of penetration believe? Why, Sir, they are malicious enough to believe, that "you learnt from your clerk as much as you communicated."

Is it not "a cruel injustice," to a Royal College of Surgeons, and a singular degree of "*badness*," to select one gentleman, however distinguished for Science, Learning, and Skill, as the sole object of laborious eulogiums? I have the goodness to explain, how it came to pass, that in all your CHARITABLE

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and, in the second place, would be great injustice to the young man himself. He was long my pupil as a student of physic; and I was much better acquainted with him than it is possible for me to be with most of my pupils, for he was MY CLERK DURING A COURSE OF CLINICAL LECTURES!!!"



CALUMNIOUS MEMORIALS, while you traduced the younger surgeons, equivocated with Dawplucker, reviled Hope and Spence, and Duncan, Hamilton, Monro, \* and in short the whole College of Physicians ! how has it come to pass, that not one drop of bitterness has overflowed upon any one individual, young or old, of the COPARTNERY OF SURGEONS ! the head and tail of which you have so curiously and emphatically praised ? How chanced it, that you are able to detail so many misadventurers of the YOUNGER SURGEONS, as you have thought fit to commemorate, in your Second Memorial, without favouring us with one word of useful information from the RECORDS OF YOUR PRIVATE PRACTICE, or practice with PRIVATE SURGEONS ? Surely you must

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\* “ But that he should have charged with “ gross absurdity, mean craft, and base injustice,” Dr Monro *senior*, Dr Hamilton *senior*, Dr Rutherford, and some other names of unimpeached integrity and judgment, I at first considered as somewhat extraordinary.

*Dr Duncan's Charge, April 1809, p. 3.*

“ But when he boldly affirms, which he has done, though not in express terms, yet in the strongest language, that Dr Monro, *senior*, Dr Hamilton *senior*, and Dr Rutherford, were guilty of “ base injustice,” it is surprising to me, that he did not pause ; *that he did not suspect he was mistaken.*”

*Dr Duncan's Speech in the College of Physicians, p. 7.*

have seen some extraordinary things in so busy a course of life? How does this happen?

“ Yet many a wretch in bedlam throws  
His filth about on friends and foes ;  
And tho', perhaps, among the rout,  
He wildly throws his filth about,  
He still has gratitude and sapence  
To spare the folks that give him half-pence.”

DEAN SWIFT.

## LETTER VI.

Dr Gregory intrigues in the College of Surgeons : Dr Gregory falls into “ Hysterics and horrible Grimaces,” on reading a description merely of a Surgical Operation : Dr Gregory forgets his father’s precepts in regard to Apothecaries : Dr Gregory offends against an Act of Parliament, Eliz. Act 5. Cap. 20. “ It is Felony, without benefit of Clergy, to be seen for the space of one month in a company of Egyptians.”

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“ He who with timely and faithful care might have proved a blessing to his family, his friends, and his country ; enters into life with his vices full blown, priding himself in them, fond to improve them, and to be esteemed for them : New desires, powerful and craving, spring up in his mind, as he comes forward into action ; his passions, headstrong and violent, level and confound all things that oppose their course ; his ambition, restless, and haughty, and presumptuous, pursues its views by all the open abuse of power, and all the hidden methods of fraud and dissimulation, not to be withstood or controuled by any re-

straints or obligations of decency, or order, or virtue : When all sense of subordination is thus scorned or neglected, what can the public expect from such a subject, but a disturbance of its tranquillity, as the desire of power, riches, or honours, perhaps as rashness only or resentment, gives motion to those unruly passions ?” \*

When ambition, haughty, restless, presumptuous, “ pursuing its views by all the open abuse of power, by all the hidden methods of fraud and dissimulation,” is exasperated by any stop or opposition ; when the objects of its pursuit dare not be avowed ; the mind and whole soul is involved in never-ceasing rancours ; success brings no contentment, reputation no honour, nor is the evening of life closed in that serene and placid frame of mind, which can only arise from the remembrance of good and generous actions.

Had you cultivated the appearance, even, of truth and honour, of high professional pride, or real charity, I should have respected the very signs and symbols of those virtues : I should not have dared to disturb your peace of mind. But it is in vain that any man will debate as you have done on moral causes, in vain will he write volumes, to prove his honour, his candour, his liberality, his veracity ! who does not bear some stamp of those exalted virtues in his actions, in his connections !

Tell us, Sir, on which of these virtues you are most accustomed to found your affections and your friend-

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\* Archbishop of York's Sermons.

ships ? For what signal display of liberality, candour, or charity ! of learning, skill, or professional science ! you are so devotedly attached to those in whose society you are most frequently to be seen ? Though you were devoted but to one associate, tho' that associate had been an early and a useful friend, to whom you were bound by every kind of sympathy, by a consonance of years and studies ; it would occasion some surprise, if even with that friend, you were so engaged, as to espouse his interests, and avenge his quarrels, and labour through all the perplexities and degradations of an intriguing life ! to risk your precious reputation for him and for his interests, in any cause, in every cause ! But why you have distractedly, furiously, given yourself up, with whatever disorderly faculties you may be thought to possess, to the service, I will not call it the friendship, of five or six !—is a question so very natural, that it is indeed worth your while to resolve it in your own way ; for I dare assure you, that acute and shrewd men hold singular opinions on this subject.

Was nothing to be suspected when a Physician became a reformer of Surgery ? When a man of rude manners, set himself to declaiming on humanity and charity ? When one, who had never witnessed an operation, nor visited a Surgical Ward, was to draw out a scheme for the administration of the Surgical Department, to point out the most skilful operators, and to denounce to the Managers “ those who should be particularly excluded ?”

Your associates well knew what was meant by the projected change in the system of the Royal Infir-



mary : But the more they knew of the real design, the less expectation had they of its success. You, alone, had the confidence to put it upon “ the sufferings of the sick poor ! ” your partizans were aware how ludicrous it must seem, were they to claim precedence as worthier men, or better operators, or to affect more liberal education, or more humane dispositions, than those whom they sought to displace ! To you, their pamphleteering physician, was assigned the disingenuous task, of declaiming about the injustice to the poor, and the faults and depravities of the younger surgeons ; about ‘ carving a reputation out of the limbs of his Majesty’s lieges,’ by myself and others, confessedly the best operators in this city ; about multitudinous disorderly consultations, among men who were really zealous and honest, and above all suspicion ; to revile them for quarrels fastened upon them by their enemies, because they saw them visibly waxing strong in reputation, and were resolved to cut short all competition by revolutionary measures.

For traditions of quarrels, and tales of scandal ; for those admirable anecdotes of “ surgeons preparing themselves, by liberal potations, for the morning’s duties, and for the delicate circumstances of their drinking their spirits of wine most scientifically out of cupping glasses,”—you were obliged to go back 30 years, and trust to the memory, perhaps to the invention, of your associates : For arguments of right and prescription, you were obliged to rake in the dust of charter-chests ! and finding in a wretched old contract betwixt the Managers of the Hospital, and Deacon Kennedy, deacon of the Surgeons, some

barbarous expressions, which mark only the rudeness of those times, and not the temper of the profession; you had the disingenuity to represent the younger surgeons as using the same barbarous expressions, as claiming upon that bond the limbs and lives of the patients of the Infirmary, as a droit of the College; as claiming, like the relentless Jew, the forfeit of their bond.

Sir, they maintained no plea but what men of humane and gentle feelings might proudly avow: they resisted no real improvement; they even delivered to the Managers of the Infirmary plans for the better regulation of the surgical wards: But, they did resist that mean rapacious intrigue by which the Royal Infirmary was to be transferred from a COLLEGE! to a COPARTNERY OF SURGEONS! To the Elder members of that copartnery, first! to their Younger Partners next! and to their dependents and sycophants, in sad and contemptible gradation! To those who, whether they could or could not operate, could vote! Who, whether they were or were not skilful in surgery, were skilful in intrigue.

But pray, Sir, will you have the goodness,—you who have declaimed about multitudinous consultations, about professional quarrels! (*Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione loquentes?*) about the absolute atrocities, and probable ignorance of the younger surgeons!—Have the goodness, Sir, to explain to the public, what number of YOUNGER surgeons now occupy the consulting room? what number of surgeons of all possible descriptions occupy now the area of the Operation-Room, and help occasionally

to pull out a stone in the operation of Lithotomy? Have the goodness to mention, (your friends can inform you, without the help of that tenacious memory they have evinced on other occasions) how many surgeons are usually occupied in performing, and what space of time is usually required for completing, that operation? Explain to us what sort of unanimity prevails there: whether the surgeons refrain from consultation-room quarrels, who cannot refrain from vindictive advertisements against each other in the public papers? \*

Pray, Sir, have not the older members of your Co-partnery, after first trying, somewhat unsuccessfully, to "carve out a reputation from the limbs of the lieges," delivered over this great charity to those who were Infirmary clerks at the commencement of your

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intrigue; to those who were the sources of your most preeious communieations to the publie on the subject of younger surgeons?

Pray, Sir, am I, or am I not, misinformed, when told, (what I venture now to report to the publie,) “that your intelligent elinieal elerk,” and three other gentlemen, also “Clinical and Chirurgical Clerks” of the Infirmary, are now the surgeons of that institution?

You have talked much, in a very enthusiastic, very impressive strain, of YOUTH and INCAPACITY: have the goodness, Sir, to mention (from me, it would be less eharitable as well as less authentic) who are those surgeons?—I do by no means forget your doctrine, viz. “That use and practice will make the most ignorant man a surgeon;” it may be very applicable; if it is so, you need not fear to name those gentlemen, for they have swarmed for years about the Infirmary, and dug for reputation very willingly and perseveringly. Who are those surgeons destined to replaece the young! and ignorant? If their names be known, not to say familiarly known, to their fellow-eitizens, I shall forfeit all pretensions to veracity!—If they are, as I suspeet, neither the most learned nor most aeomplished surgeons; if espeecially they should be found the youngest, and least skilful men of the College, I fear you eannot be thought blameless, after having aequired the LANGUAGE OF CHARITY, and the talent for REVOLUTIONS, in renouncing these great talents, at the moment in which they might be really useful; in neglecting surgical improvements at the present critical conjuncture; and aban-



doning, (to use your own favourite phrase) the cause of the poor in their "most need!"

Innocent as you are of all concern in the quarrels of surgeons, you are always, I find, the best authority for the little intricacies in the politics of the Corporation! I am a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, but I solemnly protest, that I have always trusted more to your reports, than to my own recollections, concerning the issue of any debate or vote in that society. You tell us, that on that memorable day in which the Royal College of Surgeons voted, not on the question of old Deacon Kennedy's contract, but on the question, Whether the Royal College of Surgeons should allow its name and authority to be usurped, by those who were engaged in Dr Gregory's intrigue? There were 14 favourable to your intrigue, while 15 had the spirit to despise your threats, and subject their reputation to the calumnies certain to ensue! These 15 were of course, according to your delicate phraseology, "Shylocks! the other 14 gentlemen! and so were to fare accordingly, the rest of their lives."

Well, Sir, who were those DISINTERESTED VIRTUOUS GENTLEMEN? I will take no authority but Dr Gregory's, no catalogue of names but that which he has published.

"No fewer than fourteen out of twenty-nine Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons, who were present at a memorable debate and vote of that College, on the subject of their mode of attendance in the Infirmary, expressed publicly and strongly an opinion PERFECTLY COINCIDING WITH MINE! and protest-



ed against that opposite opinion, that of the fifteen other Fellows! as irreconcilable with the good of the patients, Of these fourteen, many are men of the highest eminence that have ever been of their profession in this city! and have long enjoyed the greatest share of public esteem and confidence! and all of them are thoroughly acquainted with the subject, and with many particulars of those evils which I had stated only in general terms! Many of them had received their education in the Infirmary as clerks!"\*

There are circumstances so critical and curious in this general description of your partizans, that I cannot refrain from observing them; circumstances extremely propitious to all your purposes, and most flattering to all your best hopes: They were many of them "men of the highest eminence that have ever been of their profession in this city!" "All of them were thoroughly acquainted with many particulars of these evils which you had stated only in general terms! Many of them had received their education in the Infirmary as clerks!" Could heart of man desire better occasions of sympathy?

Well, Sir! These are the definitions or brief descriptions with which the dramatis personæ, the names of your actors, correspond admirably: You have, on various occasions, communicated the list of your voters in the Royal College of Surgeons: You should, you say, but for an accident, have had one vote more; † but you have enough to corres-

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\* Gregory's Memorial.

† "If this gentleman had not misunderstood this, and mistaken it for an insult, we should have had him also on our side, and the votes would have been divided."

*Gregory's Memorial.*

pond with this splendid catalogue of their "eminence" and "virtues;" enough to do honour to your enterprise:

Comparing your list of names with those definitions, we cannot pretend to misunderstand you. "The **MANY MEN** of the highest eminence that have ever been of their profession in this city," are, the Copartnery of "Messrs Benjamin Bell, James Russel, Andrew Wardrope, George Bell," &c. The number of these men of eminence we shall leave indefinite, for very obvious reasons. "The gentlemen who had received their education as Infirmary Clerks," correspond with the second portion of your catalogue, "Messrs John Allan, John Thompson, William Newbigging, and Peter Erskine!"—The gentlemen to whom you are so profuse of compliments on their conduct as Managers of the Royal Infirmary, were the Presidents of the College of Surgeons for that and the preceding year, Managers ex officio of the Royal Infirmary, without whose **MANAGEMENT** in both these public bodies, your intrigue would probably have brought you to immediate shame. \*

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#### FACTS.

\* It is most natural to state here to the public, and to the profession, a most singular suite of facts, and it shall be done in few words.

**FIRST FACT :** *viz.* *That these VIRTUOUS GENTLEMEN were neither more nor less than the COPARTNERY and the CLERKS !*

Mr Andrew Wood, apothecary-surgeon in Edinburgh, was President of the Royal College of Surgeons, during the two years in which this charitable Professor was COMPOSING HIS MEMORIAL, AND RIPENING HIS INTRIGUE ! Mr James Law was President of

All your acknowledgements to these gentlemen are, I am persuaded, sincere, your success wonderful, your gains infinite, “but the gods alone inspire the wisdom of silence:” Why did you not stop? Your rash and heedless malice against all your profession, has brought this upon you; the facts are now before the public, and you are to be judged by your profession.

Have you a private friend that does not blush, is there a man interested in the fame of this medical school, who does not grieve, to see its chief teacher engaged in such cabals? The Professor of the Practice of Medicine, plunged deep as greed and folly can immerse him, in the politics of a corporate body, with whose individual members, even, he should never have been seen to hold too close a commerce?

the Royal College of Surgeons, during the year in which his “EXPLOSION” took place! The whole catalogue, rank and file, of the Professor’s storming party, taking it in his own order, stands thus: “James Law, Andrew Wood, Benjamin Bell, James Russel, Andrew Wardrop, John Rae, William Farquharson, Andrew Inglis, William Brown, John Thompson, George Bell, William Newbigging, and John Allan.”

SECOND FACT.—*That the said Copartnery, and said Clerks, were all elected Surgeons!*

The CATALOGUE OF SURGEONS elected to the Royal Infirmary, stands thus: James Law, James Russel, Andrew Wardrop, Andrew Inglis, William Brown, John Thompson, George Bell, William Newbigging, Peter Erskine, then a surgeon’s clerk in the Infirmary, and William Wood, son to the said Mr Andrew Wood.

Dr James Gregory, identifying himself with two Copartnerys of Surgeons, and four Infirmary Clerks? With “a party of men of eminence,” *i. e.* well employed apothecaries who could give him practice? of others “who had received their education as Infirmary Clerks,” who could bring him intelligence and give him votes? Not independent men, acting as members of a College, conscious of higher duties, and aspiring to reputation, but puppets *Machinæ Gesticulantes*!——“He that seeketh to be eminent amongst able men hath a great task, but that is ever good for the public: But he that plots to be the only figure among cyphers, is the decay of a whole age.” \*

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Yet Professor Gregory has the extreme impudence to praise these gentlemen for their MAGNANIMOUS, GENEROUS, DISINTERESTED, VIRTUOUS VOTES!!!

The following singular document, from a law-paper in a suit instituted by Mr JAMES LAW against the Royal College of Surgeons, for TURNING HIM OUT OF THE CHAIR, and reproving him for his misconduct, proves another very singular fact; viz. that from the day in which the Professor, with the help of the “many gentlemen most eminent in their profession that have been in this city,” and the “many clerks,” had made not one convert: That he stood before the counter-scarp, to the last moment of the assault, surrounded exactly by the MEMBERS OF THE COPARTNERY! the FOUR INFIRMARY CLERKS! and the THREE PRESIDENTS!

THIRD FACT, viz.—*That the Two Thirds of the Royal College of Surgeons, resented the Combination of the Sitting President with the said Copartnery and Clerks.*

#### VOTE OF CENSURE.

The Royal College of Surgeons, at a meeting of the 5th of January, resolved, “That the President do now leave the chair:

That

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It is now, Sir, “ that I mean to enquire into your pretensions, to question your principles, to deny you (and I am loath to use such language) the common feelings of honour, probity, and veracity; and utterly to deny those tender sensibilities for the sufferings of the poor, by which you first attracted the attention of the public, and varnished over your sly designs;” for, in the execution of these designs, I find circumstances which must be accounted as proofs either of the most romantic virtues, or something sadly the reverse.

First, among your most romantic virtues stands that sensibility and tenderness of heart, which in-

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That the oldest Member of the College present be requested to take his place, and SOLEMNLY CENSURE HIM IN THE NAME OF THE COLLEGE to the effect following: ‘ I am directed by the Royal College of Surgeons, of which YOU ARE PRESIDENT, to represent to you from this Chair, that you have (with your eyes open) trampled on our laws, which, by your situation as President, you were bound more particularly to defend; and that your offence is highly aggravated by your conduct previous to the meeting called by the Committee, as well as from the nature of the defence you urged in your own behalf; and by direction of the College, I now censure you in the strongest and most unequivocal manner for such conduct.’

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Mr Flanagan seconded the motion, which was voted and carried; the following gentlemen voting in favour of the motion, viz. Walter Harkness, Thomas Anderson, Edward Inglis, Forrest Dewar, Thomas Wood, James Arrot, James Latta, George Wood, Robert Lawson, Henry Johnston, John Walker, William Ritchie, Charles Anderson, James Anderson *sen.* James Bryce, John Herdman, James Cassilis, and Lewis Flanagan; and  
the



volved you in contention with all the medical profession; but it must be confessed, Sir, that you have fallen upon singular expedients for proving that “the milk of human kindness,” so praised by your father, circulates still in the bland blood of the Gregories! Is it from your indelicate loquacity that we are to infer these close pent up feelings of tenderness? Or, are we from your voluminous scurrilities to understand, that all the charities of your nature burst forth at once, no longer capable of restraint?

When your sensibilities were first awakened in behalf of the poor, and your calumnies were poured out upon the profession in the form of a quarto

the following gentlemen voting against it, viz. *James Law, Andrew Wood, Benjamin Bell, James Russell, Andrew Wardrope, John Rae, William Farquharson, Andrew Inglis, William Brown, John Thomson, George Bell, William Newbigging, and John Allen*; Dr Lauder voted under protest against the motion.”

My name does not appear in this vote of censure. It was pronounced long after I had in prudence retired from the most scandalous scenes that ever a gentleman was obliged to witness.

FOURTH FACT.—*One of Dr Gregory's kind of Facts; viz. That two-THIRDS is a bare majority!!!*

“At a meeting of the 5th of January 1810, a motion having been made to the following purport, “That it be resolved, that the expences necessary for defending the rights and privileges of the College against the present unjust attack of the Managers of the Infirmary, be defrayed from the ordinary funds of the College,”—the said motion was passed by A BARE MAJORITY OF TWO-THIRDS!!!” Vide Memorial by James Law, then President of the College, page 6. A BARE MAJORITY OF TWO-THIRDS! By that *bare* majority of two-thirds, it was proved that the President of the said College was in concert with Dr James Gregory, Physician, the said Copartnery of Surgeons, and the said clerks, op-  
pose

volume, which you and the Managers of the Infirmary agreed to call a Memorial, I ventured to reprove you, in terms not over severe, but such as seemed suitable to a first offence. "Why (said I in my short reply) has this Physician published a voluminous Memorial, degrading to our profession, and ruinous, if not refuted, to the reputation of its younger members? Why has he not done this deed of charity in the privacy of your meetings, and gained, without ostentation, the sincere approbation of good men? Why has he tortured the public mind with needless relations of fictitious or of real misery? But he who can unfeelingly heap jest on jest, and sport with the respectability of a profession, and with the sacredness of misery, need not reply! He hath no feeling for his brother; "he is glad at calamity, and hateth the poor!"

"Why has he done this? Has his mind been thus keenly touched, almost disordered, at the miseries of his fellow-creatures? No, no! his sensibilities we hold but lightly; he never passed a sleepless night, reflecting on what was to be done on the morrow; never witnessed the severities of the surgeon; never strained hard his breath, nor involuntarily clenched his hands at the sight of another's agony, nor blanched with fear, nor felt the palpitations of anxiety in the midst of an eventful operation? Let a man feel the things he can feel, and

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posed to the *interests and rights* of the College over which he presided: That he was using the powers of the College against the College; and the Vote of that "bare majority of two-thirds," shows in what light they regarded his conduct and principles.

his sensibilities will be applauded. This sensibility is not of the right stamp ; he coolly collects his jests when he would be witty, and as coolly strains out a lamentation when he would be thought humane." \*

That you should hold such feelings and such expressions, in contempt, and comment, in the petulant terms you have used, upon this passage of my reply, is not unnatural. Yet am I not conscious that this is an overcharged picture of a man of ordinary sensibility, sitting as a spectator in a scene where the life or death of a fellow-creature is at issue, and is to be decided by a single stroke of the knife. There is here represented no writhing nor distortions : no affectation of sensibility : not the twentieth part, Sir, of that passionate charity which you affect to feel, not upon any particular act of severity, nor in a moment of danger, but upon a vague report of the sufferings of the poor. Whatever is depicted is, I think, calmly and modestly expressed ; no emotion, nor indication of emotion, is here represented, which I have not felt myself, a hundred times ; nor did I ever attend an operation, where I did not see the same feelings manifested in the countenance and action of others.

But as if this modest description had been prepared as a test of your nature ; as if it had been designed to excite your jealousy, and provoke you to some rash display of your genuine dispositions ; you took fire at this harmless passage, as if it were a deliberate personal insult, and burst out

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\* Reply on the part of the Younger Surgeons to Dr Gregory's Memorial, page 7.

in the most resentful and contumelious terms against the unoffending author.—“ Whether I am or am not (you say) subject to HYSTERICIS ! and accustomed to exhibit the HORRID GRIMACES thus BEAUTIFULLY described by Mr John Bell ! is a question of no moment, either to the Managers or to the public. But it is right they should know, that such grimaces, and many significant looks, and nods, and shakes of the head, by the grand chorus, made a part of the TRAGEDIES performed at the theatre of the hospital.” \*

Believe me, Sir, you would have done wisely, if, after your first wild and whirling essay on charity, you had abandoned the subject ; it is a delicate one for a person of your complexion to treat of. Recollect, Sir, that often men, not yet inured to scenes of this nature, have fainted when first they saw the blood of a fellow-creature streaming ; and though you never can have felt that sinking of the heart which a man of sensibility invariably feels, might you not have conjectured, that before a man faints in such a scene, “ his heart seems to sink within him ;” his senses are confused and lost ; “ he strains his breath, and involuntarily clenches his hands at the sight of another’s agony,” and at the uncertainty of the event ! That “ his face is blanched with fear” before he faints and falls down ?—Had you but called your metaphysics to your aid, and trusted rather to your reason than

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\* Vide Gregory’s Memorial 2d, page 200---500.



your feelings, you might have conjectured, that in this simple description all must be right; that what you imagined to be merely cunning, was but a simple unostentatious description of emotions very natural to those not altogether void of humanity. I do indeed believe, Sir, that if you ever again pretend to express excessive sensibility, it will be, as you have ridiculed EXCESSIVE charity, "in HORRIBLE GRIMACES;" and it would no doubt be, painful to see you disordered by a feeling, or the affectation of a feeling, as foreign to your physical and spiritual frame, as "Hysterics" are to robusteous health. Be advised, Sir, and write no more on sensibility and charity! Your lyre is not strung to the melting modes! The minor keys, expressive of lamentation and mourning, are the most difficult of modulation, and only to be touched by a master's hand.

Among your other virtues, you boast of a high proud sense of duty towards the Managers of the hospital, and I doubt not this virtue will be found to arise from the same kind of sensibility, and to be supported by the same powerful and disinterested motives, as your charity towards the poor: For it is a very singular circumstance, that you have never been at a loss to find some apology for printing a voluminous quarto, against whatever Individual, whatever College, whatever Corporate Body, it was your interest to defame! and nothing can be imagined more disingenuous, than the purposes for which you have presented yourself before the public as a libellist, unless it be the pretexts you have contrived.



Dr Monro, Dr Hamilton, Dr Rutherford, or Dr Home, who were your colleagues in the management of the Royal Infirmary, though they had conceived the nefarious design of intriguing in the College of Surgeons, and abusing the younger members for the good of the old ! would have found unsurmountable obstacles, in the manifest indelicacy of an exhibition so conspicuous, challenging at once the attention of the profession, and exciting suspicion and doubts in the mind of every man of honour. But you were “ cast in another mould, out of sterner stuff :” Ambition is seldom delicate, and your ambition, “ restless, and haughty, and presumptuous, was ready to pursue its views by all the open abuse of power, and all the hidden methods of fraud and dissimulation :” Your duty to the Managers was the pretended cause. \*

Tell us, Sir, what is the oath of a Manager, what are the circumstances in which he acts, what are his duties ? Does it enter into the list of his duties, to show himself the tyrant of his profession, the busy perturber of colleges ? Does it become him “ to disturb the tranquillity of all around him, uncontrouled by the restraints of decency, order, or virtue ?” Such duties, at least, have been hitherto unknown in that public body, to which, as a fellow member, you addressed this Memorial, which begins in the following abrupt and extravagant expression :—“ I have

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\* For a definition of a pretence, vide Letter V. page 99.

Foot Note.

for nearly a twelvemonth past, and, if I live, I shall have, for nearly a twelvemonth to come, the honour of a place among the Ordinary Managers of the Royal Infirmary."

The law declares the court of managers of a hospital to be competent to every duty which belongs to the head and master of a family: to provide for the accommodation, the care, and the safety, of the patients, to receive complaints, and to redress wrongs: and it is the manifest duty of every member of that court, to complain of whatever grievances he knows of, and to urge his fellow members to grant redress.

It is because he has this power, because he is bound by oath to speak zealously, and his fellow members to hear with deference, in their place, and in the scene of their duties, that a manager is culpable in no ordinary degree, who exceeds the bounds of duty, and seeks, under cover of that character, and in the mask of charity, to traduce any individual, or any society of men. For this, Sir, you are to be called to a severe account! Your offence proceeds not from the error of your temperament, it is the policy of your life! With the most selfish designs, you found pretexts for perturbing every society! for publishing the private transactions of the College of Surgeons! The private transactions of the Managers of the Royal Infirmary! The private scandals of the consulting-room and operation-room! The private transactions of the *Senatus Academicus*! The private debates of a committee of the Royal College of Physicians! And, finally, the most secret transactions of the whole deliberative bo-

dy of that College!—In defiance of all decency and propriety, in violation of an oath admitting of no equivocation have you done this: For, when you were received a Fellow of the Royal College, you were made to swear, “I SHALL NEVER DIVULGE ANY THING that is acted or spoken in any meeting of said College, or eouncil or court thereof, WHICH I THINK MAY TEND TO THE PREJUDICE OR DEFA-  
MATION OF THE SAME, OR ANY MEMBER THERE-  
OF! All the foresaid artieles I shall keep, and never wittingly or willingly break any one of them, as I desire to be HOLDEN AN HONEST MAN AND A GOOD CHRISTIAN.”

You desire rather to be esteemed a gentleman of extraordinary wit and inveterate malice. This seems to have taken entire possession of your mind, and to have utterly extinguished all desire to be esteemed either good or charitable! every one action of your life, either in your own college or in any other, (for you delight in libelling upon the grand scale) is a droll parody of character enjoined in this oath! the CHANCE OF INJURING! or the OPPORTUNITY OF DEFAMING! seem motives which you can no way resist.

A Manager of the Royal Infirmary rising in his place, explaining, with modesty and suavity, with perusasion and energy, the errors of any system under which so great, so interesting a department as that of Surgical Operations, was conducted, presents to my imagination a dignified charaeter, in an act of duty extremely becoming. In the COURT OF DIREC-  
TORS, and by such an address, delivered in close consultation, amidst gentlemen and men of honour,

every necessary fact might have been stated, and yet every decency preserved. The duty of a Manager might have been performed in the privacy of such meetings, with a candid, generous, and truly charitable spirit, without one word which could, (even although repeated abroad) have tainted the reputation, or tortured the feelings of any one.

You were "two years a Manager!" Then you did not want time to collect, and time to explain facts, time to digest and propose reformations, and time to enforce them! you had it in your power to speak before those Managers all that you have written! to have printed and delivered privately to your fellow-members, all that you have published to the world! and you had it in your power, in speaking or in printing, to follow that manner of proceeding which "goodness could not miss," and which the most perverse or interested would not have dared to blame: You had it in your power to compose a modest, respectful, and charitable memorial, dangerous to no man's reputation, wounding to no man's feelings.

This, Sir, is no unamiable picture of the temper or actions of a worthy man; nor is there, in this proceeding, any feebleness of which a man of talents need be ashamed. Such conduct would have been respectable, would have been persuasive: In such a proceeding, which required neither hysterics nor grimaces, but an air and manner simply charitable, you might have had the consent and aid of sensible and moderate men, of Dr Monro, Dr Hamilton, Dr Rutherford, and other fellows of your own College, who sat with you at that board, with sympathies



and charities as tender, and hands and hearts as warm and pure as your's. You might thus have increased in reputation and practice, and won for yourself golden opinions of all kinds of people! But those rewards, those "GOLDEN OPINIONS," you could attain, you thought, by an easier and shorter way.

If nothing could content you but the reputation of wit, the quarterly meetings of two successive years should have sufficed, with the mouth of a Garagautua, and the memory of a court fool, to utter all your unutterable complaints, and tell again and again all your indecent tales in successive explosions! But these no court of directors could have long endured, and for you and your practical friends, this would hardly have sufficed. The system of the Infirmary might indeed have been reformed, without your odious Memorial; new surgeons might have been selected; men of talents might have been treated with respect; and the whole department been regulated with impartial and worthy intentions. Or the institution might, on the other hand, have been abused; it might have become a scene of intrigue, solicitation, and political ferment: "Your many men of the highest eminence," might have obtained exclusive possession of that Hospital which had belonged to the Royal College; and "the gentlemen who had been educated as clerks," might have displaced by intrigue those who had been their masters; the brothers, sons, and dependents of "eminent men," might have inherited after them, as in the University of this city. But, had all these, though most interesting



changes, been accomplished by no splendid operation of yours, you would have had no claim on the gratitude of your friends ! no opportunity, by mingling in their politics, of being associated in their practice. The younger surgeons might have continued to be esteemed ; the rivals of these “ eminent gentlemen,” could under no pretext have been defamed ; the distinctions of gentlemen and Shylocks could never have been rightly established ; and all your favourite jests, after a momentary breath of admiration from the Managers, about the wit of Dr Gregory’s speeches, and private Memorials, would have been one by one referred to Joe Millar, and the other original authors, and your reputation have gradually died away, just when it should have attained to its zenith.

By this Memorial, and this intrigue, did you signalize your introduction into practice, and your entrance into public life. It endeared you, no doubt, to your associates : it ensured you a reputation which every after act has well supported, and such rewards as you have found no doubt very consolatory, under those various shocks, from which even vanity such as your’s could not protect you.

Supported by such associates, on such principles, I do feel, worthy Professor of Medicine, that your trade is more enviable than your reputation ; and I wish this may not be accounted (at some future period, when prejudice has subsided, and the text can be impartially compared with the comment,) a striking example of those reciprocities among the several departments of the profession, which your father has hinted at, with a degree of delicacy which enables

us to mention it even in your presence : “ But it is a known fact, that in many parts of Europe, physicians who have the best parts and education, must frequently depend for their success upon apothecaries, who have no pretensions to either the one or the other ; and that the obligation to apothecaries is too often requited, by what every one concerned for the honour of medicine must reflect on with indignation.” Your father, with a peculiar delicacy, refers the ignorance of apothecaries, and the subserviency of physicians, to “ many parts of Europe.” He would not, by any direct expression, involve the British dominions in the reproach, and I shall not be the first to apply it to my native land.

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## LETTER VII.

PROOFS of the Manly, Generous, and Candid Dispositions of Dr GREGORY : PROOFS, from his own Memorials, that he knew nothing of the Interests, Quarrels, or Intrigues of Surgeons : PROOFS that he never has been yet able to learn the Names of Surgeons, or to discover, “ Who and who are to together.”

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AFTER having followed so implicitly the methods of Martinus Scriblerus, in all deep and abstract studies, and improved many of his happiest inventions, especially that of “ prescribing for any patient, at any given distance, the age, complexion, and weight of the person, being given !” you may now regard yourself like that original, as a “ philosopher in disguise,” and will think it no dishonour to be compared, in the highest points of his character, with that ornament of literature and physic :\* “ Under his uncouth form was concealed a mind replete with science, burning with a zeal of

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\* Life of Martinus Scriblerus.

benefiting his fellow-creatures, and filled with an honest, conscious pride, mixed with a scorn of doing or suffering any the least thing, below the dignity of a philosopher." "A philosopher in disguise," like a prince in disguise, steals out secretly to mingle with the mob, and finds a particular pleasure in giving way to the lowest indulgences, and most criminal passions, if it were no more than as a relief from the tediousness of his own greatness and wisdom.

You like to temper the dignity of philosophy with the familiarity of useful and worldly occupations, and when your natural principles have drawn you into any perplexity, your philosophy has time to rally and come to your relief. Surely it is a singular infelicity, when a man's boldest and most solemn asseverations carry invariably the impression of untruths; and it is still more singular, that Dr Gregory should have anticipated doubts concerning his own veracity, which none but himself would have dared to entertain, and had begun to suspect himself, long before he was suspected of others! long before it would have been decent or safe to hint, that a Professor and a Physician, born in the best rank of society, and educated by a prudent father, whose integrity and honour were unimpeached—cultivated interests which he durst not avow, or was capable of maintaining them at the expence of truth.

Your suspicions have led you into rash anticipations, which have at last awakened the curiosity of the public: you unfortunately mistook IGNORANCE for INNOCENCE! and in the first alarm, protested

utter **IGNORANCE** in place of entire **INNOCENCE** of the contentions, quarrels, and interests of the profession.

How could you, Sir, with all your metaphysic skill, commit such a blunder as this? You might have known of all the quarrels, all the intrigues, all the petty interests of Surgeons, all their professional jealousies, with as innocent and pure a spirit, as that with which the gentle Cowper looked through the loop-holes of retirement at the vain pursuits, and follies of the world. But your conscience had taken the alarm,—you were resolved to exhibit substantial and visible proofs of your **INNOCENCE**, of your **INDIFFERENCE** to the interests, of your **IMPARTIALITY** in the quarrels of Surgeons, and of your **VERACITY** and of your **LIBERALITY**! and you have alleged such proofs, and dwelt upon them so emphatically, as to have left no manner of doubt.

An over anxious attention to veracity has given a very odd complexion to your Infirmary Memorial, and indeed to all your memorials, whatever their additional title, or secret purpose. You have, in every one of them, declared, in almost every page, your contempt of professional quarrels,—your indifference to all parties, and all interests;—You have even gone so far as protest your utter ignorance, of the very **NAMES OF MANY OF THE SURGEONS** of this city, while you were actually counting their votes in the Royal College of Surgeons, and balancing, with wonderful address, one party against the other!

You have ten years ago prepared for the charge of want of veracity! and have demonstrated even in



your first memorial, in the year of GOD 1800, that whatever might be insinuated then, or in future, to your discredit, by Surgeons or Physicians, by Individuals, or Colleges, or Corporate Bodies, could be nothing but malignity and envy, nothing but the inventions of low jealous creatures, against the most upright, dignified and virtuous man that ever has arisen in our profession, to do honour to its principles, or reform the age.

You have just published a quarto of 700 pages ; the stile and title of the volume I do not correctly know ; but the purpose is, to defend yourself from the accusation of deliberate untruths, and your very manner declares your innocenc ; for, in place of being discomposed by an accusation so unusual, you are wonderfully witty ! quite loquacious ! and very amusing ! Yet even here, in the midst of your cares for your reputation, you do not forget the main business of your life, to traduce your rivals.

It is to me surprising, that any individual, much less a grave body of physicians, should think of questioning your veracity at this late period of your career, seeing that your reputation for veracity was perfectly established by your first memorial. You know nothing of surgeons ; of the intrigues of surgeons : the interests and interested quarrels of surgeons : the very names of surgeons : unfortunate, ill-advised, ignorance !—You were engaged deep in a professional intrigue ; the possession of an Hospital was the object ; and you had but to look round you to become sensible of the dishonour that awaited you : But you had conversed already too

much with “ eminent men, and well-informed clerks:” You felt their interests closely connected with your own, and were inspired with their most odious passions!

A Professor and a Physician, really jealous of his honour, would have stopped here, and paused; would have eyed his associates with doubt, and have watched carefully over his own thoughts and actions, and would have said within himself, “ Shall I, rising into reputation, while my own feelings are pure and honourable, involve myself in intrigues? Shall I hire my talents, or the authority of my name, to enterprising men? Shall I put myself to the ignoble work of writing pamphlets, and hoarding up, for occasions of future vengeance, malicious tales, concerning men, perhaps more able and enlightened than those who tempt me? Perhaps I may be labouring to promote to the highest offices of trust, those who have neither reputation nor knowledge, who depend merely on intrigue for their success. Shall I suffer my honest fame to be tarnished by suspicions; shall I become the visible organ of a party, for traducing talents, and protecting ignorance?”

You tell us, Sir, that you knew nothing of surgery, and nothing of surgeons, nothing of their intrigues and their quarrels; and as for the subjects of these, they are what you despise: But I say, Sir, it was your duty to society, your duty to yourself, to know every thing about operations! about operators! about surgery! and about the quarrels of surgeons! These are things not unworthy of your talents, and nothing is so hidden as to be beyond your reach!

Your talents at enquiry are not contemptible, and your friends, your learned and respectable friends, and the young gentlemen who had their education in the hospital, made it a principle (seeing that you were so willing to espouse their cause) to withhold from you nothing of that information which they delighted in communicating, and which you were, of all their party, the best qualified to display ! They were not so ungenerous nor so wicked as to employ you in groping through an intrigue, always in the dark.

When a man's interests and resentments are put in the scale against his honesty and reason, these must be strong indeed to resist the bribe : and when his resentments are immediately gratified, and his interests guaranteed by a mob, who have the same feelings with himself, the victory is sure, the extravagance he is ready to commit, knows no limits. A faction seldom leaves a man honest, even though it finds him so ; and he who involves himself in the passions of a party, and partakes the interests of a set of covetous, cunning men, abandons all hopes of honest fame, and lays sure, very sure, the foundations of his own disgrace. Few and venial are the offences of an individual ; for his resentments are moderate and rational, being limited to those from whom he has suffered manifest injuries : Such resentments carry with them, too, a degree of sympathy, society is pleased to see a man defend his interests and his honour : but the passions of a party are undefecated pure malignity ; it is only in the first moments, that a man's generous principles or just sentiments can

save him from the contagion: once involved, and put to act the base disingenuous part assigned him, all the interval betwixt the imagining and the perpetrating, is full of confusion: He sees, hears, and understands, through the organs of others: His senses are drowned in the general clamour; his talents made subservient to the general interest; his very honesty is part of the contribution; he must subscribe every thing, or abandon every thing; he must share the obloquy, else he cannot share the gains!

“ You knew nothing of surgeons !” Before your memorial was printed, before it was written, and, of course, while you were meditating that great enterprize, you held your secret conferences with those who were to back you in that intrigue, and to support you, might I not say, repay you with practice. “ Before my Memorial was printed, or indeed written, I had learnt, ‘ by CONVERSING ! with some of the most EMINENT OF THE SURGEONS ! that they reprobated the system of attendance in the Hospital, &c. &c. as much as I did.’ \*

When the reign of terrorism began, and the revolution was at its crisis, you spared none of those threats and cruelties, which have always accompanied kindred movements. “ You cannot fail to perceive, that though they are (*i. e.* malicious tales concerning the conduct of yourself and the younger surgeons) in one point of view foreign to my argument, and unnecessary to it, they are not subversive of



it. It is plain that they tend greatly, too greatly, to strengthen, not to weaken, my argument, and the managers claim. They WOULD SOON PRODUCE ALL THE EFFECTS WHICH WE WANT, BUT THEY WOULD DO A GREAT DEAL MORE, WHICH WE DO NOT WANT, AND SHOULD BE VERY SORRY TO SEE! IF IT EVER SHALL BE FOUND NECESSARY, WHICH I AM HAPPY TO THINK IS NOT LIKELY TO BE THE CASE, to make them KNOWN, IT CERTAINLY SHALL BE DONE!"

"None of the Managers can be supposed so brainless, or so nerveless, as to hesitate a moment between the two wrongs, shocking the public with the particular knowledge of such evils, or allowing such shocking evils to continue."\* "It is right, however, to warn them all, AS I DID MR JOHN BELL, PRIVATELY AND PERSONALLY, BEFORE HIS ANSWER TO MY MEMORIAL WAS WRITTEN, THAT IF THEY BE NOT VERY CAUTIOUS, they may soon and effectually frustrate my purpose, in that kind of reserve! Many of them must already know, and all of them, if they chuse to take the trouble to enquire, may soon learn, from unquestionable authority, to WHAT OCCURRENCES, AND CONSEQUENTLY TO WHAT INDIVIDUAL SURGEONS I ALLUDE: IF THEY WILL NOT KEEP THE SECRET AS THEY OUGHT TO DO, I CANNOT HELP IT; NOR DO I CARE; LET THEM SEE TO THE CONSEQUENCES."†

It is impossible, Sir, to doubt the deep interest those

\* First Memorial and Letter which accompanied it.

† Gregory's Memorial.



eminent men took in relating, or their friendly Physician in hearing, those tales: The spirit of charity, must, in such communings, have sunk deep into your heart, aye, into "your very heart of hearts," You must have been impatient of such abuses, and enraged at the perpetrators: You were a Physician, preparing, for the first time, to write about surgery, and, I have no doubt, you prepared yourself diligently: You were no spectator, nor any way a witness of these atrocities; you proceeded upon information! Is it possible, that while you learnt more than you durst repeat about surgery, you knew nothing about surgeons? That when you learnt all the wickedness, and ignorance, of the younger Surgeons, you learnt nothing of the interests of the old? Did the "most eminent gentlemen" (for you never condescended to converse with any other, except—the better informed Clerks of the Hospital) did eminent men unfold to you such atrocities on the part of the younger surgeons, as it was almost criminal to relate, without that display which was so natural, and so innocent, of the incalculable advantages in public and in private practice, of having those younger surgeons, by some revolution, violent or peaceful, prevented from operating in the Infirmary? I have a persuasion, that several of those ATROCIOUS YOUNGER SURGEONS, were attaining, under the public eye, to such a height of reputation, as must have been painful to the EMINENT GENTLEMEN you conversed with; such as in place of exciting emulation in those younger gentlemen who had their education, as you are pleased to call it,

education in the Hospital, drove them to desperate, very desperate ways.

Though these are feelings to be judged of only by actions, and are seldom voluntarily disclosed, yet, those with whom you condescended to converse so familiarly, owed every confession to you, who were ready to risk every thing in the cause. All these invaluable tales of scandal were hoarded for a purpose you never had the prudence to conceal, the PURPOSE OF EXCLUSION ! which after all that knavish ignorance which you affect in your first Memorial, is, in your Second, expressed in these plain broad terms : “ These principles, (professed by Mr John Bell, and those in whose name he has answered my Memorial) will not only prove and illustrate, in the clearest and strongest manner possible, MY DOCTRINE of the ABSOLUTE NECESSITY of SELECTION among men of their profession, either for hospital duty or for PRIVATE PRACTICE ! but, will have the merit of POINTING out to the PUBLIC ! which I could not have presumed to do, SOME OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS ! who ought FIRST and most CERTAINLY to be excluded ! and held as DISQUALIFIED for that sacred office ! Hic niger est, hinc ni Romane cave-to.” \*

Well, Sir, the purpose you had was most liberal ; the information you had obtained very precious, and the sources of it every way suitable to the genius of the enquirer. Those were virtuous conversations : You shewed yourself a “ most virtu-

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\* Memorial, Second Published, and circulated gratis, for the purpose of calumniating Mr John Bell, Page 511.

ous" Physician, and able Professor; and you had the good fortune never to be without most "virtuous" coadjutors, whose merits you have not failed to signalize.

"Yet, in these most trying circumstances, they (viz. the two Infirmary Clerks,) have had the MAGNANIMITY to sacrifice all considerations of private resentment and dislike, and to support me ZEALOUSLY IN AN UNDERTAKING WHICH THEY KNEW TO BE RIGHT, AND FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD. This conduct has raised them much in MY OPINION: (Dr Gregory's opinion!) And it is fit I should say so; for if they they had acted otherwise, I should have been strongly tempted to impute their opposition to their animosity against me, not to any honest difference of opinion with respect to the subject of my Memorial. BOTH OF THEM had received a great part of their education as clerks in the Royal Infirmary, and must have known THE TRUTH OF ALL THAT I HAD STATED, and of many PAINFUL PARTICULARS which I should be very sorry to be OBLIGED to state! (You were actually then informed at that moment.) I regard their conduct, on this occasion, AS A VERY HIGH DEGREE OF VIRTUE! the more to be esteemed that such examples are RARE!"—God bless the virtuous Professor with his virtuous clerks: Such disinterested talents, and such virtues, transferred from dignified stations in the Infirmary to the Royal College of Surgeons, and directed by Dr Gregory, and rewarded by being made surgeons of that institution, must indeed impress all learned and virtuous men with respect.

It does not appear, Sir, that you at any time were without correct and curious information of all that was transacted in the Royal College of Surgeons: Why, Sir, the clerk of the corporation himself had no such information as Professor Gregory could boast of! The clerk of the Corporation knew the the names. Professor Gregory knew the names, motives, and purposes! of every member! the object! and the success of every vote! There was one occasion, indeed, in which you expressed some confusion at the ill success of your inquiries, viz. "how any College could give a vote of thanks for Mr Bell's Reply to Dr Gregory's Memorial." "There was" (you say) "some secret about it WHICH I COULD NEVER GET AT THE BOTTOM OF IT." Really, Sir, your disappointment is expressed in terms so purely technical, and so applicable, that we cannot conceal from ourselves that you were a thorough paced inquirer, perhaps we might say inquisitor, into the character and actions of the gentlemen (of the Shylocks, I beg your pardon,) of that College! and your information is so peculiarly that of a spy, that though it is impossible not to believe you knew every thing, it would be difficult to make you confess that you knew any thing.

But on every other occasion you exult, and you have reason, no doubt, to exult in your success: Even in this you did not give way to despair. \* You added to those examples of the "very

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\* "With equal ease," says Dr Gregory, "I could have published the names of the majorities, *whose conduct has given occasion to those remarks*; but I refrain from that rigorous iron justice,



high degree of virtue, the more to be esteemed that such examples are rare," the names of four other other similars of virtue. "Such has been the conduct of Messrs Andrew Inglis, William Brown, John Thomson, George Bell, William Newbigging, and John Allan. It is but justice to these gentlemen to mention their names, as it would be highly injurious to them to have it believed by the public, that they concurred with the majority of their brethren, the Junior surgeons, in so unjust and absurd an opinion of my Memorial, and in their resolution to request Mr John Bell to write an answer to it." \*

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justice, in consideration," &c. *Vide Memorial*. "By the letter prefixed to Mr John Bell's answer to me, every reader, not previously in the secret, must have understood, that all the junior surgeons concurred in that request to him to answer my Memorial: But, in fact, six of them had no more concern in that request than they had in the gunpowder treason; the case is still stronger with respect to the vote of thanks *for that answer, which vote was published in the newspapers*. That vote of thanks, far from expressing the general or unanimous sense of every Fellow of the College, individually, probably did not express the sense even of the Majority, perhaps of very little more than a third part of their whole number. *To the best of my information*" (indeed, Sir, you never are deficient in INFORMATION!) "*and belief, 29 was the greatest number present at any of the meetings of their College about that time, of whom I am certain that 14 never did or could concur in such a vote of thanks. The whole number of the Fellows of the College of Surgeons at that time, I believe, was 46; but of this number, at least a third part did not attend the meetings of the College, or take any concern in its transactions.*"

\* Gregory's Memorial.



We have been long taunted with the superior virtue of these six gentlemen; these MAGNANIMOUS clerks! But the virtues they may claim in this, are of a very homely kind. You have chosen to publish the names of these gentlemen to the world: I desire all men to look at their names; to say, whether, by long services in the Infirmary, by distinguished talents in their profession, by profound learning, by a humanity and tenderness of nature, different from the savage dispositions you were pleased to ascribe to the majority of the Royal College, they had any peculiar claim to be elected Surgeons of the Royal Infirmary? Whether they could (magnanimity out of the question) do a more sensible thing than subscribe to your memorial, and protest against the reply? I desire, Sir, a plain direct answer, Whether there can be a more homely kind of understanding than that of knowing one's own best interests! or a more ordinary 'virtue' than that of pursuing them through every obstacle?—In praising these gentlemen thus notoriously for understanding and prosecuting their interests, you praise the virtues you love and practise.

But I have to beg your pardon, you are so entirely ignorant of the interests, quarrels, or even names of surgeons, that you may have completely forgot even the names of these gentlemen: Permit me then to inform you, that the names you have by ACCIDENT mentioned in this PROPHETIC PARAGRAPH, chance to correspond with the names of the six Surgeons of the Royal Infirmary, with the addition of one other gentleman, who, though not a Fellow of the College of Surgeons, was at that time receiving the

rudiments of a ‘ virtuous education’ in the hospital of which he is now Surgeon. \*

It is strenuously recommended, though in a very homely proverb, to men of sanguine temperament, and lively imaginations, to cultivate the memory, as a corrector of their more discursive and amusing talents: You have sadly neglected this, in so much that it is difficult to understand your voluminous memorials; but when one does take the pains to confront paragraph with paragraph, they are full of surprising facts. †

You have discussed, more freely than any man ever did before, the ways of making practice gain-

\* To be elected Surgeons of the Royal Infirmary, was a thing not displeasing to these virtuous gentlemen ! To become Surgeons of the Infirmary by plain competitions, was not among their expectations ! Messieurs ‘ ANDREW INGLIS, WILLIAM BROWN, JOHN THOMPSON, GEORGE BELL, and WILLIAM NEWBIGGING, and PETER ERSKINE, are SURGEONS of the ROYAL INFIRMARY ! Dr Gregory’s lists are as prophetic as those of Bancho pointing to his progeny.

\* *FULL AND TRUE ACCOUNT ! of Matters of which HE NEVER HEARD of ! by Dr James Gregory, Profssor of the Practice of Physic in the University of Edinburgh.*

“ A few months ago, one of my professional brethren, a Physician in Edinburgh, who knew when I was engaged in, (viz. this defamatory Memorial) and wished well to the GOOD WORK !!! (The very cant of hypocrisy) mentioned to me, Jonathan Dawplucker, Esq., and finding me totally ignorant of his peculiar merit,

ful, and have related so many amusing anecdotes, as convinced me that Dr Gregory, whatever his contempt for the scientific professors of the art, for those who have a silly belief in the virtues of medicine, has a thorough conception of this department. 'When two or three of us (he observes) are set down together in a little town, or fifty or an hundred of us in a great town, and obliged to SCRAMBLE for fame and fortune, and DAILY BREAD, we are apt to get into rivalships, and disputes, and altercations, which sometimes end in open quarrels and implacable animosities, to the very great annoyance,' &c. \*

I make bold, Sir, to cut short the wit, that we may not lose the sense of this admirable observation :

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#### FULL AND TRUE ACCOUNT, &c.

rit, explained to me the nature of his Janus-like mask, and gave me such an account of his wit and inveteracy, as not only afforded me much amusement, but gave me a great desire to read his works. My friend promised to send them to me for my perusal, and actually sent them to my house a few weeks after," &c.

VERY WELL !

J. GREGORY.

*First Memorial, p. 247.*

" I hereby SOLEMNLY DECLARE, (observe now, gentle reader, for the Professor never fails, after a SOLEMN DECLARATION, to prove himself 'once a gentleman and always a gentleman) I hereby SOLEMNLY DECLARE, that I have not read ONE WORD of his books ! except the passage about myself, I do not know one ARTICLE ! of the SUBJECT ! of contention in them : I do not know even the TITLES OF HIS BOOKS !"

*Ibidem.*

VERY WELL !

\* Gregory's Memorial.

It is singular, Sir, that you have commented on this word DAILY BREAD! so much in all your memorials, as to prove that it is much the subject of your speculations: DAILY BREAD is, at least, the leaven, (as you would probably term it,) of many professional rivalships, disputes, and altercations, and certainly of all yours.

One would have thought that, to a man so well acquainted with the ordinary ferment, this business of the Infirmary, might have relished somewhat of the old BATCH: And, indeed, Sir, you must forgive me telling you, that certain collateral ideas prove, that your thoughts are always turned this way; all your similes savour of it; and when you illustrate the Surgery of the Hospital, and

#### FULL AND TRUE ACCOUNT, &c.

“ Mr Dawplucker’s mask is of so new and admirable a kind, and he makes such an exquisite use of it, that it is worth while to explain a little the nature of the contrivance which, with shame and sorrow, I must confess I should never have discovered or suspected, and which I was not informed of till within these five months, though I had seen the paragraph or note about myself fifteen months ago.”

“ In this first publication, he plucked very smartly one eminent member of the Royal College of Surgeons, who is considered AS THE GREAT LEADER, and the man of GREATEST TALENTS OF ONE PARTY; this, of course, gave great satisfaction to the other party. In his second publication, to the utter astonishment and confusion of all concerned, he fell upon one of the MOST EMINENT SURGEONS of the OTHER SIDE, and plucked him still more numer-  
cifully.”

VERY WELL !

*Ibid*, p. 239.

the possession of it, by the similies of "ox and the contract!" and the "tanners and the butchers!" and the "brewers and the bakers!" and the "loaves and the fishes!" you are writing DAILY BREAD, as plain as a sign post.

Well, Sir, you shewed yourself possessed of the temper of an inquisitor, with the information of a spy: you proved that you had it in your power to torture the feelings, or ruin, at will, the reputation of any younger member of the Royal College: you had treasured up in your memory, a thousand calumnious tales, too big for utterance, yet too useful to be entirely suppressed!—you waited the issue of every motion in the College of Surgeons! counted the votes! printed the names! and commented on the princi-

#### FULL AND TRUE ACCOUNT, &c.

"It happens that I am personally acquainted with BOTH THE GENTLEMEN whom Jonathan Dawplucker, Esq. has plucked so cruelly. I know that BOTH OF THEM are men of talents; BOTH OF THEM, for ought I know to the contrary, may be very good surgeons. But, in the present state of chirurgical WARFARE in this CITY, a consultation of them both (supposing one consulting room to hold them both, which is more than I know) would be too BAD FOR THE DEVIL! (always elegant) if he had gotten a stone in his bladder." (always elegant!) page 248.

VERY WELL! One would imagine, that the knowing who and who were not together! were a tolerable step towards learning, "who and who were together;" no,—not a bit, a metaphysician will know not one word more or less than it is convenient for him to know! not one moment sooner or later than he chooses!

First, Jonathan Dawplucker plucked very smartly ONE EMINENT MEMBER of the Royal College of Surgeons, who is considered as

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\* See note, p. 176.



ples and secret motives of every individual in that corporation! you had prepared eulogiums for the “ eminent and respectable members, and those who had received a PART of their education in the Hospital (as if the whole had been too comprehensive to be acquired in any one place:) You had learnt to distinguish the elder members from the Shylocks, the gentlemen from the Jews of the College!—You poured forth all this information upon your fellow-citizens, as freely as ever the “ Hospital surgeons poured their libations from the cupping-glasses:” and yet, the purity of your exalted mind remained unsullied!—You “ never could learn who and who were together:” nor ever suspected that your “ eminent surgeons,” or “ well informed Infirmary clerks, cared about daily bread!”

#### FULL AND TRUE ACCOUNT, &c.

the GREAT LEADER, and the man of the most talents of ONE PARTY! Very well!

“ In the next publication, he fell upon one of the most EMINENT MEN of the OTHER PARTY! Very well!

“ It happens that I am personally acquainted with both the GENTLEMEN!” Very well!

All this, let the reader observe, is printed from the First Memorial, addressed to the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, and laid upon their table, and officially acknowledged by them in the month of July 1800.

The following paragraph is from that pitiful apologetic Memorial transmitted in MSS. to Mr Bell, late in the month of August, after he had been invited by the younger Surgeons to write a reply to it.

“ You may judge how strictly I have adhered to my avowed principles, never to meddle with any of your PROFESSIONAL OR

CORPORATION

Really, Sir, those modest confessions of your ignorance and incapacity give me great confidence in my own discernment and good sense. I have ever believed myself inferior to you in extent and accuracy of intelligence; and infinitely less acute in my conjectures. But now I am reconciled with myself; just as a person who believes that his memory, sight, or hearing, begin to fail him, is delighted to find that others remember with less precision, or see or hear with less acuteness. Had I been on familiar terms with a "copartnery consisting of SIX APOTHECARY SURGEONS," I should have found no difficulty in "discovering WHO! AND WHO! WERE TOGETHER."

But these, you seem to intimate, are questions unworthy of men of science, men of dignified

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#### FULL AND TRUE ACCOUNT, &c.

CORPORATION disputes! when I assure you MOST SOLEMNLY!—that I DO NOT KNOW! NOR CAN I GUESS! who is the LEADER of the opposite party in your College!—As little do I know who and who ARE TOGETHER ON EITHER SIDE!—or what are the subjects of your contentions!—These are THINGS! into which I never enquired, and of which I never CHANCED to be informed!"

I declare with equal solemnity on my part, that I should abhor the crime of quibbling away the reputation of any man of honour, or representing an accidental error as a deliberate falsehood. But here are the facts for any man and every man to judge of; here, according to my simple apprehension, is a deliberate untruth, contrived to support a digested system of equivocation and lies. I leave it to the public and my profession to judge, whether this be not a very very contemptible equivocating creature. Whether my advice to this person, to cultivate his memory and correct his MORE SOLEMN ASSEVERATIONS before he PRINT THEM, be any way superfluous.

and liberal minds. I give you joy of having escaped unpolluted, from scenes sufficient to corrupt one of a less generous spirit, and I commend your IGNORANCE: Preserve it faithfully, persevere, Sir, I entreat you, in those generous resolutions, for INNOCENCE, like yours, has no guard so safe and sure as this kind of IGNORANCE!

## LETTER VIII.

The Professor's unhappy peculiarity of Memory lamented: He is complimented on his ingenious talent of *Remembering to Forget*;—praised for his liberal and expensive Donations of Books to the Credulous Inhabitants of this City,—and congratulated on the happy selection of his Practical Friends, and the curious manner in which he has fulfilled Chaucer's Character of a "Perfect Practitioner."

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I AM persuaded, Sir, that the instructions of Madam Malaprop to her Niece, when she requires her to learn to forget, are perfectly practicable: "I believe you know, (to use your own peculiar language) a great deal more of this matter than me;" and find it not only a practicable, but an invaluable attainment. "Forget," (says Madam Malaprop to Miss Lydia,) "I charge you to forget, NOTHING IS SO EASY AS TO FORGET, IF A PERSON CHOOSES TO SET THEMSELVES ABOUT IT."

Your talent of forgetfulness far excels that of Royalty: You not only "remember to forget," but, in the most natural manner imaginable, "forget to remember!" At the time when your conspiracy was quickening into actual explosion, there

appeared a pamphlet, or rather a brace of pamphlets, under the fictitious name of "JONATHAN DAWPLUCKER:" You tell us that you "FORGOT to ask" who Dawplucker was, and what this mystery meant: I think, Sir, I shall be able to satisfy even you, that though perseveringly told all about Dawplucker, you were at infinite pains "to forget to remember!" And I am sorry to remind you, Sir, that for that persevering ignorance, and industrious forgetfulness, you had a MOTIVE! a MORAL CAUSE!

No one could have thought of questioning whether Dr Gregory did or did not know of the appearance of these twin stars, nor what the influence of this rising constellation upon the reputations of professional men; but when Dr Gregory comes into court, like General Clavering, uninvited, and for the express purpose of declaring "That he knows nothing about Dawplucker!" When Dr Gregory, in four successive quarto volumes of seurrility, dwells everlastingly on the anonymous Dawplucker! When he inveighs against the malignancy of his writings, describes his purposes, and infers the strongest argument for reforming the surgery of the Infirmary from his writings; and yet protests, for a course of years, that he knows nothing about Dawplucker! we cannot help saying, "What, in all the world, can be Dr Gregory's reasons for knowing nothing about Dawplucker?" Why, every body knew about Dawplucker! Every friend was officious to tell Dr Gregory about Dawplucker! —Every one acquainted with the "good work in which he was engaged," hastened to inform him of the wit, spirit, and inveteracy of Dawplucker, and thence



inferred irresistible arguments in favour of his "good cause!" Every Physician and Lawyer in Edinburgh; every common friend of Dr Gregory's; every Student; every Nurse; every Intelligent clerk in the Infirmary; (and Dr Gregory had some intelligent clerks) every OLDER, as well as every younger surgeon, could have told Dr Gregory all the machinery of these two pamphlets!

But Dr Gregory was too disinterested, too honourable, and too "virtuous," to know any thing of Surgeons, or Surgeons' Quarrels, and pursued a line of conduct too dignified to admit the familiarity of surgeons, or physicians, or students, or clerks, or any kind of being that could look like an informer. On occasions of this nature, "a man's honour," he declares, is "as delicate as a woman's chastity;" and no one who knew Dr Gregory's extreme delicacy, and virtuous rage, would have dared to approach him with filthy information; at least he must have done so, at the peril of utter perdition, of being fulminated "to the Devil," or "deserving to be hanged."

But, besides this termagant virtue, his prudence was concerned, for Dr Gregory has a kind of prudence. It would have been extremely inconvenient for Dr Gregory to know much about this pamphlet; extremely unpleasant to have the whole told of what he knew, of what every man knew; viz. that the first of these pamphlets was a foul and scurrilous attack upon the character and writings of Mr John Bell! That the preface to that work was full of coarse invectives, and direct comparisons betwixt the talents and the publications of Mr John Bell, and those of Mr James

Russel, who had the prudence and good fortune to write NOTHING! and of Mr Benjamin Bell, who, before he had attained either knowledge or prudence, had written too much! That Mr John Bell wrote No. 2. of that celebrated work, as a just recrimination and most natural act of self-defence!—anonymous only to give a momentary effect, and excite the attention of the profession; but without any mean or cowardly secrecy, “for that was a pamphlet, (to use the unguarded expressions of the very candid and very honourable Professor Gregory,)\* “which the author never denied.”

These are facts, which it must have been painful for the disinterested and worthy memorialist to tell; which it was certainly wiser not to know. It must have been painful to acknowledge the participation of his learned friends, in an ungenerous, anonymous, unsuccessful act of treachery: Most painful to acknowledge, that on the day in which the Second Number was published, the great surgical work of Benjamin fell down dead, with a sound as melancholy as the hat of Corporal Trim, cast down in lamentation for the death of brother Bob; as heavy as if it had been accompanied in its fall by Dr Gregory's biggest quarto.

“Nescire paratus,” is temper of mind full of wisdom, perhaps, but I am sure it is full of danger, and one which no gentleman, who has any regard to his reputation, will ever henceforward indulge. It may be a painful compliment I am about to make you, but I can assure you it is a true one, that thousands have wondered at Dr Gregory's IGNORANCE, for one

\* Vide Gregory's Second Memorial.

that has wondered at his KNOWLEDGE. You did right to proclaim your IGNORANCE and INNOCENCE! for there were many circumstances to mark you as the person in this city the most likely to know every thing:—the most inquisitive person in the city, the most skilful in detecting an anonymous author,—a literary intrigue—or an enterprise against an author's reputation!

If you were ignorant of the nature or design of these pamphlets, it was not from their being circulated in secrecy; they were advertised in rather an unusual manner, on every gate in this city!—not from the want of notoriety, for they amused, and, (as you yourself acknowledge) agitated the medical world: Not from the obscurity of the authors alluded to, for the professional reputation and the surgical works of your dearest and most practical friends, with whom you “consulted a hundred times,” were deeply involved:—Not from the suddenness of the explosion, for there were two successive publications, the ATTACK upon Mr John Bell's character, and the REPLY at a considerable distance of time:—Not from your indifference to professional quarrels, for you are a wit, and these “explosions,” as you term them, always afford you much amusement. your amusement, besides, was at that moment rather of a grave complexion; you were defending yourself in the Consistorial court from an accusation of calumny; and your crime was a defamatory pamphlet!—Not from indifference to the character, moral or professional, of surgeons; for the characters of surgeons was the direct object of discussion in all

your private consultations ! and these two gentlemen were the “ LEADERS,” you observed, “ of the opposite parties !”

With so many temptations to break your secret vow, you had infinite merit in your persevering and spontaneous ignorance ; and your modesty is particularly enhanced by this circumstance, that you made no enquiry about the authors of those anonymous pamphlets, admitted no information, nor shewed the slightest token of jealousy, although, till this remarkable period, you had been reputed the most able and daring pamphleteer, the only writer indeed of that description in this city.

There are so many circumstances creditable to you in this resolute and persevering ignorance, that I should feel myself guilty of the greatest injustice were I to touch at all upon this subject, without enumerating them more circumstantially.

*First,* You had been hitherto the only medical pamphleteer in this University. Pamphlets had indeed been published for very base and greedy purposes ; but they were anonymous. Dr Gregory was the only man in the rank of a gentleman who had condescended to reply, or to become professedly a pamphlet writer. You had been so struck with the disingenuity of one pamphlet, ascribed to Dr James Hamilton, hereditary professor of midwifery, that you could not repress your indignation. You went straight to the Senatus Academicus, and urged the professors, in a very extraordinary harangue, to become public prosecutors, and to indict the said junior professor ; and, when they



gravely declined this invidious duty, from which they could foresee nothing but disorder, and found in what you said no relevant proof, you concluded that memorable exhibition, with what you very wittily term an explosion.

*Second,* You resolved, since the *Senatus Academicus* was not disposed to hearken to your accusation, nor to approve your harangue, that you should “shame the fools, and print it.” You published the harangue under the form of a pamphlet, very cruel, if unjust, in which you point-blank accused the young man of a villany which he *DELIBERATELY* and *SOLEMNLY DENIED*; and in order to make out the proof of his guilt, you condescended to the lowest arts; you dabbled with informers of the lowest description, hunted tales of calumny through the vilest channels; clerks, nurses, students, and doctors newly graduated, were the contributors to this farrago of defamation and wickedness; and you sat day after day writing puzzling letters to all the booksellers in London, and to friends over all the world; and were closeted with Mr Kerr of the post-office, examining dates, signatures, post-marks, &c. with all the diligence and science of a state-inquisitor. Such were the talents for busy inquiry and relentless persecution exhibited in this your first essay. Have you lost those precious talents, and this inquisitive disposition, so invaluable in matters of science? or, have the inflictions of the Consistorial court cured you of this sort of ambition?

*Third,* This offensive pamphlet, attributed by you to Dr James Hamilton, junior, was plainly one of



those things you had “ never got to the bottom of;” and we are entitled to infer, that your curiosity was still alive. It surely would have been some sort of triumph to have recovered the fine extorted from you by the Consistorial court; and some gratification of the “ odium in longum jaciens,” to prove that Dr James Hamilton, hereditary professor of midwifery, was actually the author of that pamphlet called a “ Guide to the Students.” Now, Sir, what method more likely than to enquire into the motives, and examine the style of this new pamphlet! to observe the enmities or alliances which had given rise to this new and sudden explosion of professional malice? This, like the former, was an unprovoked attack upon the reputation of Mr John Bell; a pamphlet as like the former, “ as my fingers are like my fingers.” Would it not have been an excusable, a laudable curiosity, if Dr Gregory, the detector of anonymous pamphlet-writers, had turned over the leaves of this, and tried to retrace this new villainy to its source, even though it had involved him in some slight acquaintance with surgical intrigues? Was this a subject so dark, that you could not, or so delicate that you durst not enquire?

*Fourth,* You were, I believe, actually defending yourself in the Consistorial court against the law-suit of Dr James Hamilton, whom you had publicly and libellously accused of being the author of an anonymous pamphlet, when this second anonymous pamphlet appeared; and you were not only meditating your surgical revolution, but actually busied in composing your own memorial. You “ were convers-

ing with "some of the most eminent of the surgeons," and learning this third pamphlet, the second number of Dawplucker, was "a critical review of the works of Mr Benjamin Bell, surgeon;" and it was surely natural to take an interest in this gentleman, "whose opinions so happily coincided with yours." Surely, if you were so grateful as you affected to be, towards Mr Benjamin Bell, and of course to his son, then your Infirmary-clerk, the least you could have done was to have taken an interest in the general success of both, and especially in the reputation of the father: The least that became you, was to express some solicitude about the fate of his works.

You had five years before caught up an anonymous pamphlet, from a bookseller's table, and were so inflamed, the Gods alone know why, with rage, that you instantly replied to it. Here was a pamphlet, traducing the reputation of your very LEARNED FRIEND, your AVOWED FRIEND. It would have been no unbecoming act to gird on your panoply, and sally forth in his defence: but you chose a prudent and respectable part, and continued profoundly ignorant of both these pamphlets, of all the quarrels, and of every defamatory work but that on which you were yourself so busily occupied.

*Fifth*, The review of the works of Mr John Bell, and the review of the works of Mr Benjamin Bell, were both advertised in the same newspapers, and on the same board at the gate of the Infirmary, with your own lectures! The scurrilous review of Mr John Bell's works, which you now speak of with so much exultation, was invidiously advertised on the Infirmary gate,

because there he was daily employed in performing operations:—on every gate of the College, on the door of every lecture-room, to affect his character as a lecturer:—on every conspicuous corner of the city, with the hopes, even by advertisements, of ruining his reputation. But the innocent and ignorant Dr Gregory never heard of such contrivances, nor suspected such disingenuous doings, till he was told at a very distant period something about Dawplucker!

Dr Gregory, when insulted with any useless or untimely information, wisely forgets it, and lets it sleep till it can be made useful. \* Though often ignorant of plain matters, which all the world expect him to know, though he can not even guess who and who are together,—

“ He knows what’s what, and struts as high  
As metaphysic wit can fly.”

It is one of the peculiarities of the memory and the genius of the Professor, that all his knowledge comes to him by accident, always in the critical moment

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\* The perseverance and assiduity with which this honest gentleman will hunt the most insignificant secret, for the most trivial purposes, might be exemplified in a thousand instances: Take the following: “ When his pamphlet, (viz. Mr John Bell’s Reply to his Infirmary Memorial) came out, wishing to have COMPLETE INFORMATION ON THE SUBJECT, I begged of my friend Mr Creech to ask Mr Hill whether the fact was so; he very obligingly did so; and informed me, that Mr Hill assured him it was as I had been told. I presume I owe that good office, on the part of my learned brother, to his resentment against me, for having told him, near three years before, that I should never again meet with him in the exercise of my profession.”

*Gregory’s Memorial.*

when it might be useful, always of the very kind he wishes to have, sometimes to prove his innocence, sometimes to help his malice ! He comes before the public tribunal like the man who mocked at the oracle of Apollo ; holding a living bird in his hand, he demanded of the oracle whether it was dead or alive ; if the oracle declared the bird to be dead, he was ready to open his hand and produce it alive ; if the oracle said the bird was alive, to squeeze it, and produced it dead.

Your liberality, Sir, is next to your veracity and innocence in regard to professional quarrels, the virtue which you take most pleasure in proclaiming, and which I do most willingly acknowledge to be as entirely beyond all comprehension, as beyond all praise. You have written four quarto volumes, the printing and distributing the first of which “ cost you the sum of £ 500 ! ”\*—Five hundred pounds ! Why, Sir, did you not trust volumes so lively and amusing, so full of anecdote, scandal, and all that is supposed to promote a quick circulation, to the usual fate of pamphlets ? Why was it not sold ? You were a professed scoffer at religion and virtue, and exhibited your profession, and did not refrain even from exhibiting yourself, in such ludicrous postures, as could not fail to attract the curious and the idle. You had taken entire possession of the weak side of society, by proclaiming yourself an admirer of scandal, and an adept in it, as “ one abundantly acri-

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\* Vide Gregory's Memorial.



monious, as all your enemies could tell ; or, if they would not, it could be ascertained by very incontrovertible proofs." You never hesitated to amuse all who were capable of being so amused, with the most indelicate tales ! Why, with so many just claims upon the public, could you fear to commit your rich loaded prize uninsured to the common dangers of the seas and of pirates ? Why did you send to every family, gratis, a volume which those who delight in genuine wit should have bought so greedily ? Five hundred pounds ! Was this given for the sake of the Infirmary, of the sick poor, whose sufferings and sorrows you so pathetically lamented ! Was it the groans of the ox that moved you to this act of liberality, or, was it the sight of the unrelenting Jew whetting his knife and trimming his scales, prepared to cut his forfeit from the breast of his debtor ?

Truly this was not merely a professional, but a very princely donation, and implied a most feeling heart ! Here, Sir, was the true proof of your charity ! Such charity and such enthusiasm, might " have pleaded trumpet-tongued," in extenuation of all your lesser faults. But had you conversed with any less distinguished patron of charity, with any plain sensible citizen of Edinburgh, he would have soon convinced you, that to be guilty of extravagance, is not the way to begot a reputation for sincerity ; that, if you affected such expensive charities, good and tender as your nature is, you would hardly be believed.

But charity and liberality are every way inherent in your nature, not to be restrained by considerations of



prudence, when any "good work" is to be performed. You were conscious that, though as one of those whom you found it right to traduce, under the stile and title of Younger Surgeons, you had paid me every compliment which your delicacy could convey, under the fictitious names of "Junius," "Janus," "Daw-plucker," "head of a party," &c. there was something still to be done. The Infirmary was disposed of: I had retired from lecturing, to private practice: I had withdrawn that direct and visible competition which had made me odious to your best friends: Yet even in that private, unostentatious, and inoffensive sphere, the germs of reputation seemed still fresh and flourishing. There was a permanency in my professional character which you had not looked for, because you had not reflected that it was founded on no arts but on acquirements obtained by earnest, diligent, well directed studies.

You still found something to fear, "You'd scotched the snake, not killed it, and it might join and be itself again." After three years of seeming charity with all men, you burst upon the public with a new Memorial of 500 quarto pages, in not one page of which was my name omitted; No part of my moral or professional reputation was left untouched: Your enmity was so unambiguously expressed, that I should be very insensible indeed if I did not feel the value of such a testimony; no mean nor worthless creature has ever shared with me those reproaches in which you are so skilful; no respectable person of my profession has escaped them: Foul befall the man who is not proud of your enmity.

This volume also was a free gift to the public, merely a free gift, without the slightest collateral motive. I confess the ingratitude of never having read it. I turned over the leaves, and tumbled the volume quietly "into the vault of all the Capulets," where it has remained quietly inurned among its ancestry, and waiting its successors six years, in undisturbed repose. It was an eloquent book and expensive; yet much as I am honoured by so voluminous and unequivocal a compliment, I confess to you I am of opinion, that the seven hundred pounds thus squandered on so inconsiderable, on so very small an object, \* might have been more charitably bestowed in procuring a few meals of bread and cheese for "the rats and the mice of the hospital." But I am proud to think you bestowed

*The ELIGANT and ELOQUENT PROFESSOR GREGORY proves Mr John Bell to be a very inconsiderable PERSONAGE.*

\* It would be a manifest injustice to the celebrated Professor to refuse him the praise due to his poetical imagination. He has illustrated this *point* with such rich and splendid imagery, and such aptness and elegance of quotation, as is rarely to be met with but in his own writings.

"All the great poets, ancient and modern, from Homer down to the time of Milton, have shewn a strong partiality to heroes of the *largest grenadier size*. Milton, in particular, carried this partiality to a most extravagant pitch. But the faithful page of authentic history must convince every judicious and candid reader, that many of the greatest men in all ages have been of small stature. Alexander the Great, Augustus, Prince Eugene of Savoy, the Archduke Charles, Dumourier, nay Buonaparte himself, all have been little men. The greatest hero that ever Eng-

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more upon me than on the whole body of the Younger Surgeons.

When you had settled the domestic quarrels of our College, you turned with good will to your own : You found certain of the younger physicians much inclined to believe, that among the purposes of their education, and the uses of those talents which they had acquired by long study, one was to practise the profession they had learned : and had they been permitted quietly to prosecute this sly design, there is no saying but that medicine might have been with us in Edinburgh as contemptible an art as it is in our sister kingdom, practised only by physicians ! while the “ men of eminence with whom you were accustomed to converse,” and their sons

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land has produced was of the smallest size of any that we read of in true history. I do not mean Lord Nelson, though certainly a very great hero and a little man ; but one much greater, and still smaller, of whom we read in the Tragedy of Tragedies, which bears his name.

“ Though small his body be, so very small

“ A chairman’s leg is more than twice as big,

“ Yet is his soul as any mountain great ;

“ And as a mountain once contain’d a mouse,

“ So doth this mouse contain a mighty mountain.

“ Let Macedonia her Alexander boast ;

“ Let Rome her Cæsars and her Scipios show :

“ Ireland her Os, her Macs let Scotland boast ;

“ England shall boast no other than Tom Thumb !”

“ But, unfortunately, he was cut off in the flower of his youth, and in his full career of glory, by the most calamitous and horrible fate that ever yet befel a mortal hero ; he was swallowed by a red cow.”

*Gregory’s Second Memorial.*

and partners, might have degenerated from their present high character for science and learning, and become downright apothecaries, simple retailers of drugs, sticking up those sign-posts, which, about twenty-five years ago, they had the pride and folly to remove quite out of sight.

These young physicians imagined that the licence to practice *ubique terrarum*, might be honestly and honourably supposed to include their native city: You maintained the metaphysical opinion, that as *ubique terrarum* plainly meant “all the world over,” it could not mean this city, and all the world over they were most welcome to go practise!

Convinced of the knavery of their designs, you were roused to a new exertion of virtue, and a new and splendid act of munificence: You prepared for the public at great cost, a new gratis quarto book, to defame the College, and to expose their knavish designs: You foresaw, with your usual sagacity, that if every physician of a college were to practise even among his own relations and friends, gradually enlarging his circle, as he advanced in years and reputation, the medical character would, by becoming common, become contemptible: That if every toad of a physician crawled from under his stone, to bask in sunshine; if all the obscure monks of this religion swarmed from their cheerless cells, to mix with society, and take their share in the duties of life, there would be an end of all supremacy! Why, Sir, it is notorious, that had the younger physicians been permitted to dispense medicines, they would, in fact, under the semblance of



promoting trade, have actually ruined it! for then physicians, men of unquestionable learning and science, of sober and gentlemanlike manners, men in the middle period of life, would have supplanted a race of shopboys, the most industrious and thriving that ever exercised a profession; and they would probably have so conducted themselves, as rarely to have required the assistance of any more notorious practitioner, either to help them to a new form of prescription, or to cover the blunder of their practice.

All your studies and all your writings, (as becomes the Professor of the Practice of Medicine,) are purely practical. You resisted this innovation with a constancy and "virtue" most commendable; you resisted, Sir, as if your very existence, and that of your "eminent friends," had depended upon your success, while it is manifest that the honour of the profession alone was endangered: Liberal on all such occasions, almost to a fault, you composed that elegant refutation of those heretical doctrines, which you entitled a Censorian Letter\*; a fulmination which follows pretty closely the form of a papal bull; but in respect of modesty, zeal, tolerance, and temperance, it surpasses all precedent. In many passages of this work, you proved plainly that these innovators were such unprincipled villains, that far from associating with them, you would not drink of the same cup, even at the altar. This anathema

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\* This great philologist makes a slight, but not insignificant error, in the orthography of this title, which he had permitted to be printed off uncorrected, it was "A CENSORIAL LETTER."



you printed and promulgated at a great expence, but it was not thriftless, it was to serve a wise and “virtuous” purpose; and if it was followed by any slight irritation in the Royal College, you have a sovereign remedy for every such feeling, “the balm of your own approbation.”

That must be, indeed, a sovereign remedy, for which you will have daily more and more occasion, your own good opinion being needful now to replace the changing affections of many who were naturally inclined to do justice to those talents, and homage to those virtues, which they were willing to believe you had inherited from your birth; but while you were performing prodigies in literature, and reprovng colleges, and reforming surgery, certain unlucky accidents inclined the malignant PARTY in your own college, (which extended, indeed, to an unanimous majority, wanting two only, viz. yourself and your partner) to doubt your virtuous intentions, and plainly to deny you the homely and ordinary virtue of speaking truth. Your name was protested in the newspapers \* as a man who, in the presence of a great and respectable public body, had been guilty of a breach of the first and most essential moral virtue, veracity; and the declamations and assertions of the malignant party in the College of Physicians, were of such a nature, that no longer able to contain your just indignation, you have published a fourth quarto

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\* Vide Advertisements of Dr Duncan’s Letter, and of the Narrative by the Royal College of Physicians.

volume to vindicate your veracity, with two prefaces, two appendixes, relative documents, and all the other apparatus, and concomitants of truth.

But, if I were to suggest a doubt on a subject so delicate, it would be on the prudence of this last wasteful expence. "Wasteful expence!" you will say: "Can a man's fortune or talents be more profitably employed than in defence of his reputation?" Reputation of every other kind, should be defended at every expence, and through all kinds of dangers; but believe me, Sir, the virtue of veracity, when it is at so low an ebb as to be capable of no other defence than this, is hardly worth defending; the garment so becoming, when pure and unsullied, when rent and torn by rude and wicked hands, and requiring to be pieced and clouted, is not worth the wear.

Of all your gratis publications, this alone seems in any degree selfish; but while you are defending your veracity, you do not forget to defame your colleagues and rivals. This, to use the French expression, is a permanent duty, and this last effort completes the catalogue of your liberalities, and thus stands your account-current with the public: For defaming the younger surgeons, anno 1800, 500*l.*;\* for defaming Mr John Bell thoroughly, anno 1803, 700*l.*; for calumniating the younger fellows of the College of Physicians, anno 1805, 300*l.*; for defending your veracity, and defaming the whole

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\* The first of these calculations is Dr Gregory's, the others are gratuitous, and proportioned to the size of these volumes.

College of Physicians, anno 1809, 800l. Total 2300l. Whether any man of science has ever done so much for medicine or surgery, and so freely, is much to be doubted; but you are one of those wise spirits who know "what seed will grow, and what will not." Twenty-three hundred pounds worth of calumny, sown in so rich a soil, † must produce a thick and thriving harvest, a harvest "of loaves and fishes," and "DAILY BREAD," with which, God bless you, your labours have earned it for you, and you will eat it unenvied.

It is singular, that all your books are donations, that you give them freely to all who are able to read, and it is shrewdly suspected to some that are not! Were you ever to return from those deep speculations on trade, to the study of your profession, it is believed you would teach science like a very deity, and be, indeed, our great Apollo. The SOURCES of your LIBERALITY and BENEFICENCE have become as much a matter of wonder as the excess of this passion in you, a passion, so far removed from the "sacra auri fames," the "belli rabies," the "amor habendi." But have those "eminent men," whose opinions chanced so fortunately to be the same with yours, and who are by profession much interested, in reforming surgery, taken no other share in your splendid works

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† This gentleman has spoken so of the culliability of the good citizens of Edinburgh, as to show that he was perfectly acquainted with the qualities of the soil.

than merely to circulate them? Have they permitted you to contribute all the calumny, and all the funds necessary to your success? or do they think to compensate by fees (which your great professional talents must have procured you without their help) for such an abuse of time, and irreparable loss of reputation? Have they contributed nothing!

“ That in return would pay the expence,  
The wear and tear of conscience?”

If they have acted this heartless part, they are guilty of a virtual breach of that tacit contract, which even the most worthless are said to observe in their transactions with one another.

Your rewards for all your literary labours, have been of a nature the most gratifying to a generous mind! the grateful acknowledgements of those who had benefited, or thought to do so, by your surgical reform: You had the applause, and even the acclamations, of those “ whose opinions so fortunately coincided with your own:” You express a just apprehension least approbation, such as belongs to you to express, might injure those to whom it was addressed:\* but you did not consider that neither the reputation nor sensibilities of men so well known are easily injured. Neither the Presidents of the College, nor the eminent gentlemen with

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\* Vide his invaluable P. S. to his Memorial, addressed by way of Dedication to his best friends, and as it is reprinted in footnote to these Letters, at page 107.

whom you had conversed, nor the virtuous clerks, were any way injured by your manner of mentioning their names! How could they fail to feel grateful towards you, and seek every possible and PRACTICAL way of expressing their feelings, who, amidst the contempt so plainly expressed for Surgery and Surgeons, and, amidst the levities and indelicacies of your language on all ordinary subjects, found their names never omitted, where they could be profitably introduced, and never mentioned but with tokens of attachment and profound respect, as men of "high degrees of virtue, the more to be esteemed as it is rare;" "zealous in that undertaking which they knew to be right, and for the public good!" Their grateful recollection of those expressions, and of the enthusiasm you have felt in common with them, in a "virtuous cause," must be a daily gratification to you.—If the patronage of a profession, allied with your own; if the gratitude of three Presidents of the College of Surgeons, one Copartnery, and all the clerks! (and all the rabble who are dragged at the skirts of a party, through the mire of revolutions;) if thankfulness for present patronage, or the expectation of future promotion; if pre-eminence over more able surgeons, which no other kind of talents could have procured them, do not help, in despite of nature, to make you a thriving physician, adieu to friendship, honour, gratitude, hope, and emulation!

These alliances and connections help to sustain you amidst the waters: they are your fins, your oars, your air bladders! and great bodies and magnificent projects equally required to be thus sustained and kept



in motion ; “ non sum nescius grandia concilia a multis plerumque causis, seu magna navigia a plurimis remis impelli.” \*

You are given to classical studies, and you no doubt delight in the classics of your own country, fully as much as in those of Greece or Rome. You recollect the admirable description of a Perfect Practitioner by our poet Chaucer. I know no physician so well entitled to claim the distinction and title of “ PERFECT PRACTITIONER,” as our illustrious Professor of the Practice of Physic, who, in improving on all the theories of his ART, has far outstripped his predecessors, and courageously deviated from the feeble counsels of his father, and has braved the opinion of the world to attain that pre-eminence.

“ He was a very perfect Practitioner,  
Full reddy had he his 'pothecaries  
To send his drugs and Lectuaries ;  
For each of them made other for to winne  
Their friendship was not new to begin.”

CHAUCER.

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\* Strada de Bello Belgico.

## LETTER IX.

On the CONSTITUTION of the MEDICAL PROFESSION, and the  
reciprocal Duties of Individuals and Corporate Bodies.

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“ And is thy active folly adding more  
“ To this most worthless most superfluous store ?”

—————FOR ever, Sir, while you live and breathe, this must be your wretched occupation, while you are awake to that keen sense of interest which secretly guides your most disorderly actions,—while there remains one man of unblemished reputation to stand as a reproach to you.—Whether your fellow-citizens are reconciled to continued distraction, because the extravagance, the indecency, and

wickedness of your writings, defeat their purposes, I know not; but to those who suffer the deepest injuries from your unprincipled way of life, it would be an injustice to allow the disorders of your intellect to stand as an excuse for the rancours of your heart. Calumny and defamation, so useful in your first professional enterprises, so necessary to support your interests, has become a natural appetite, which must be gratified: "Like the tyger, which seldom desists from pursuing man after having once tasted of human flesh, he who has once gratified his appetite with calumny, makes ever after the most agreeable feast upon murdered reputation."

Guided by a wonderful instinct through the darkest paths that lead to practice, you have never been known to mistake the point in which your interest was concerned; to scruple at the calumny which those interests required; or, to relent, when men, obnoxious only by superior talents, moderation, or goodness, were to be traduced: Nor have you ever been known to relinquish your hold, till you had at least accomplished all that malice or equivocation could atchieve. Your philosophy and metaphysic skill, are kept in just subserviency to your practical and worldly duties: You have the enviable talent of turning the most abstruse speculations to direct practical uses.

To disturb your own College, or assail your immediate rivals, before you had prevailed in ours; to abandon all pretensions to character, before you

were assured of practice, was an act of impolicy of which you were incapable!—the violence of your antipathies never carries you into any such dangers. Having traduced the good, obtained the assured friendship of the bad, selected from among the members of our College, those who could give you practice, and sealed your friendship by services never to be forgotten! you turned with eager haste to new quarrels, and more bitter enmities! You undertook next to calumniate the fellows of your own College, and with talents marvellously improved.

You had fixed one foot firm in the College of Surgeons, before you endeavoured with the other to trample and tread down the College of Physicians. Those secret emotions of displeasure which good and prudent men seek to repress, you seem proud to indulge, under colour of reforming or reproving public bodies (yet God knows how you came to think of reproving or reforming) you contrive to calumniate the individual members! to traduce your rivals! and gratify your revenge! And, in order to insure the applause of the vulgar, you season the calumny with scurvy jests! But in one thing you are no hypocrite. So very coarse is your nature, so defective your education in certain essential points, that you really and sincerely wonder when scurrility, ribaldry, and blasphemy, give offence! Individuals are to be traduced in their professional and moral reputation, colleges insulted, the profession brought into contempt; yet no one must dare to represent to the public the incapacities of a man thus floun-

dering at once through quarrels and practice.

'Twere meet, indeed, that colleges, and committees of colleges, men of studious habits and real skill, were meek and gentle with this "Bully-bottom," who plays the Lion's part amidst his herd of Athenians or Boetians, rather

" Hard handed men that work in Athens here,  
" Which never laboured in their minds till now."

Your part in the comedy you study with wonderful diligence, though it is one which you might play extempore "for it is only to roar."—

" His igitur furiis ; totoque ardentis ab ore  
Scintillæ absistunt ; oculis micat acribus ignis ;  
-Mugitus veluti cum prima in prælia taurus  
Terrificos ciet !"—

It is become now a favourite sport with the inhabitants of this city, to see you run headlong among the ranks of your profession ; and it requires, in my mind, some particular enactment for the safety of the simple and innocent spectators. "At Tubbling in Staffordshire, when the bull-running begins, the Magistrates, (says Blackstone,) are bound to make proclamation to this effect: That all manner of persons give way to the bull, none being to come near him by forty feet any way, to hinder the minstrels ; but to attend to their personal safety, every one at their peril."

You belie the opinion of Adam Smith, who encourages us to hope, that "though the coarse clay



of which the bulk of mankind are formed, can not be wrought up to perfection ; yet there is scarcely any man, who by discipline, education, and example, may not be so impressed with a regard for general rules, as to act upon almost every occasion with tolerable decency, and through the whole of his life to avoid any considerable degree of blame."

The general rules which it was most natural for you to have observed, were the precepts of your respectable father. Those should have taught you to act on every interesting occasion with decency, and to have led an useful, honourable, and blameless life. But you have fallen, it is to be confessed, upon evil times, and have laboured through a distracting and agitating scene, the medical politics of this city centering in you, and moving by the impulse of your great talents.

These political agitations, and interested connections, were the very dangers against which your father warned you : These are scenes in which passions, like your's, controuled by no fixed principles, resentments, modified by no kind nor generous thoughts, turbulent and distracting jealousies, without the qualifying virtues, ambition, without the professional talents on which right ambition should be founded, were sure to bring you to that state of degradation in which you now appear, the envious calumniator of your brethren.

You have taken it upon you to be a reformer of the principles, and a reprover of the morals, of your

profession; the calumniator of a College of Physicians, composed of Monro, Rutherford, Hamilton, and Home, Hope and Spence, and Duncan, and Stewart; studious, worthy, and honourable men, hitherto unimpeached in morals, and of unquestionable talents; men who either have studied the structure of the human frame, with a view to the cure of its diseases, or are learned in chemistry, and other departments of natural philosophy: men of respectable lives, ambitious only of professional knowledge, the true source of professional skill: men whose veracity is not yet suspected, whose minds have never been estranged from their profession, whose imaginations have not been distracted with irrelevant quarrels, nor perverted by metaphysical and fantastic studies.

Have you detected your fellow-members in dishonest alliances abroad, or mean connections in their own college, wasting their precious hours in subtile and fantastic studies, thriving by intrigues, or inviting hostility and courting quarrels? When you affect to overshadow the college with your laurels, and awe them by your skill in metaphysics! when you propose to reform their corrupt system of conduct by the pure moralities imbibed in your daily intercourse with a club of surgeons, you provoke that severe inquiry, which, to a reputation like yours, must be fatal.

Are those, whom you have perseveringly insulted, men of covetous and cunning dispositions, with whom, poverty has so seared the conscience, as to

make them willing to snatch at the gains of practice by the sacrifice of every charity ? No, Sir ; let a man who knows the world look around him, and impartially compare the Royal College of Physicians of this city with similar institutions in other countries ; let him generously dismiss those fretful and peevish humours, which the best men cannot at all times escape feeling, and suppress the petty irritations, too apt to arise from opposition of interests, and rivalry of talents ; let him lay his hand upon his heart, and say, where there may be found a society of men more independent in circumstances, more open or generous in conduct, more charitable in their professional offices ? Whether that College, of which the Monros and Rutherfords, and Hamiltons and Duneans, and Hopes and Homes and Stewarts have been members for so many years, has not carried its honours as fairly, and as untarnished with private quarrels or public scandal, as any that can be named ? Whether there has been any society of medical men more moderate and unassuming in their public conduct, more modest, gentle, and amiable in private life ? Above all, I must ask, where an aggressor like you could have found men so patient of insults, who, educated as scholars, and entitled to respect, could have thus long endured “ the rattling tongue of sauey and audacious eloquence.” Had you, amidst these unenvious and honourable men, aspired to reputation by professional excellence, or cultivated practice by honest means, you might have lived honoured and respected, and left an enviable reputation behind you.

Do you in any degree remember the words of Solomon, or know the precepts of your father? "Humanity, sympathy, and tenderness of heart; gentleness, modesty, and candour; patience, good-nature, generosity, and compassion, and all the gentler virtues that do honour to the human heart," are the dispositions he invites us to cultivate; "harshness, intolerance, and insolence of nature," the bad passions he teaches us to repress; "rough and blustering manners, (he declares,) accompany a weak understanding and a mean soul, and are affected by men void of magnanimity and personal courage, in order to conceal their natural defects." He marks, with peculiar detestation, the trading alliances of apothecaries with physicians, as destructive of all independence: He reflects, with indignation, on the mean and treacherous compliances which such debasing influence entails upon the physician: And for the quarrels of physicians, he reminds us of this disgraceful consequence, that "when they end in appeals to the public, they generally hurt the contending parties, but, what is of more consequence, they discredit the profession, and expose the faculty itself to ridicule and contempt."

Have you indeed, in the new edition, of your father's works, revised without correcting, those obnoxious expressions, without cancelling the obsolete virtues of temperance, charity, and sympathy? Are forbearance and generosity, modesty and candour, humanity and gentleness, still to be the attributes of our profession, as they certainly are, to

use the words of Blackstone, “ the cardinal virtues of the heart ? ” Or, do you mean to correct those timid expressions by your own great example, and try, upon the personal feelings of your profession, how far they will suffer such mistaken precepts to be reformed ?

But you are, perhaps, so infatuated as to believe yourself a true disciple of your father !— That you should be subject to a delusion like this, surpasses belief : We should be inclined to pronounce him “ *Corporis non mentis parens* : “ He begot your body, not your mind ; ”—a mind diseased with incurable affectation and folly. But there are unhappy beings whose imaginations are so disordered as to live in the absolute persuasion, that their ribs, and loins and joints, and limbs, are composed, not of animal fluids and solids, but of bend-leather and glass ; therefore, it is not impossible that Dr Gregory may believe that he is treading the paths of honour, and living in sympathy, peace, and charity with all men ; that he is “ a physician endowed with knowledge, living peacefully in his habitation.”

I do not know that there ever was a human being so thoroughly insensible as you are to the rights of others, or so coarsely indifferent to all the proprieties and decencies of life. By unprincipled, unremitting hostilities against the reputation of your brethren, you have violated the constitution and principles of your profession, and the peace of this city. These are not “ wild and whirling words ; ” they are considerate affirmations, and will admit of



the most deliberate proof: Our much respected profession has laws and a constitution, growing out of the common feelings of men educated in the same course of study, and associated in corporate bodies for the exercise of a charitable calling, and for the improvement of science:—Ours, like every well regulated profession, has its NATURAL CODE OF LAWS, a common system of feelings and sympathy among its members.

It is not to the opinion of society at large, so much as to the feelings of his own proud and punctilious profession, that a soldier looks for the rules that are to direct him in an affair of honour. The Lawyer, the Divine, the Merchant, and the Soldier, have their professional virtues of good faith, religion, probity, and courage, modified in each by a peculiar system of feelings, and by peculiar habits of life, and each is amenable to the opinion of his profession, for the degree in which he practises these virtues. Every man is more imperiously called upon to maintain the constitution of his profession and its moral laws, than an individual citizen to maintain with life and fortune the freedom of his country.

The natural laws and ordinances of our profession are those common feelings of right and wrong, honourable or dishonourable, which grow up with our studies, and guide us in our practice; by which we are enabled to fulfil our sacred duties with sympathy, zeal, and charity, and by which individuals are enabled to maintain themselves in the esteem of the world for learning, humanity, and virtue:

It is by those feelings they are taught to conduct themselves towards each other with mutual politeness, forbearance, and respect.

How unfortunate is that man, who has formed no liberal and just conceptions of the acquirements, the temper, and the habits of life, which fit him for the sacred duties he owes society; who, in a profession sacred as ours ever must be, rushes unprepared into practice, snatches at a hasty reputation, unfounded in professional studies, and seeks, by some gross and glaring affectation, to take off the enquiring eye of his profession from such defects.

No principle is more universally true than this, That not even the most trivial action of a moral agent, is without its influence on the fortunes and happiness of numbers; that in great and important affairs, an individual is as little privileged to trespass on the dictates of morality, which is justice felt and acknowledged, as against those of the law, which is justice defined and declared. The steps are almost imperceptible by which the offences of an individual affect, first his own respectability and happiness, extend next to the happiness and fortune of others, and finally influence the constitution of his profession, and the prosperity of public bodies! An individual may assume the most incongruous dress, and addict himself to affectations the most ludicrous and indecorous; these have no influence beyond the general estimation and respect with which the individual is regarded: But when that individual is a member of a particular profession, and those peculiarities are found inconsistent with the costume, the

manners, the usual conduct and implied habits of mind which belong to his tribe ! observation is sharpened, by aversion, these oddities are protested, the incongruity becomes offensive, resentment is mixed with contempt, and the individual and his conceits and follies fall into general disgrace.

But when, in place of silly and degrading peculiarities, he adventures upon a line of conduct in the more important concerns of life, derogatory to the respect and honour of his profession : when, by unusual, disingenuous, or cunning ways, by bold, and frontless calumnies, he intrigues against the reputation, interrupts the success, and disturbs the happiness, of his colleagues ; he violates plainly the constitution of his profession, and becomes amenable to vengeance more cruel than that which any established law can inflict, the indignation and contempt of society !

You have somehow inured yourself to opinions which have carried you into very singular excesses. You have accustomed yourself to believe, that it is the privilege of every individual to do whatever he listeth !—In this sense no man is individual ; his circumstances connect him with society, and his slightest actions affect the feelings and interests of numbers : Where the force of law ends, the tyranny of opinion begins, against which individual strength is of no avail ; the individual finds himself, like Gulliver, bound to the ground by innumerable petty ligaments, which constrain every movement of his body, and when he struggles to loosen his bands, the whole

puisny nation watch his motions, and stand ready to put him to death with poisoned arrows.

The objects of every physician are fame and fortune; but they are usually pursued by methods widely different from those on which you have cast the chances of your life. The love of your profession, as a branch of philosophy, you have never known; to honour and respect it, as useful to your fellow-creatures, seems never to have entered into your imagination; in such a state of mind it is but too naturally to be inferred, that all your feelings must be selfish; if the purposes of your vanity and jealousy were but fulfilled, the fate of your science, or its professors, would give you no concern.

Professional zeal, like patriotism, has its natural causes; and in a profession like ours, supported by public opinion, the feeling should be particularly strong. To a physician, the study of his science is a long and pleasing investigation of the most interesting and secret parts of philosophy; and its practice a perpetual exercise of skill and charity, of "the noblest faculties of reason, and of the cardinal virtues of the heart." His reputation and his fortune are secure, if he is known to excel; and where he is received, it is with affection; he becomes a member, as it were, and confidential friend, in many families whose griefs he has shared and alleviated, and who rely on his skill and friendship: His learning and talents procure him the esteem and society of men of the first rank, and afford him the choice of the virtuous, and distinguished, with whom he may form alliances of intimacy and friendship:



Much reason has he, then, to guard a character so precious, and to prove himself worthy of this confidence ; to regulate his heart by principles of benevolence and virtue, and his carriage and outward conduct by suavity, gentleness, and candour.

The principles and moral habits of our profession are thus prescribed by nature and custom, and must be ever guarded with the utmost solicitude ; they cannot be violated by individuals, without being abandoned by all ; the member who, by unjust or unusual combinations, by defamatory conversations, or scurrilous pamphlets, by intrigues against the reputation of his brethren, and coalitions in trade, violates the just principles of our profession, does a personal injustice to every man of honour ! A man of honour is not to abandon his principles, and seek to form opposite combinations and counter-intrigues ! A man of study is not to forsake the best and most virtuous occupations of his life, for the purpose of writing pamphlets, in which he yet could never contend successfully with the cunning knavish creature who invented such a means of thriving ! Men who have sought distinction and respect by severe study, and grave and gentleman-like retirement ; who, by the nature of their researches, and the objects of their ambition, have learnt to respect themselves, cannot, will not, be forced into collusion with low intriguing men of trade, in order to continue the successful rivals of one who has openly betaken himself to gainful, dishonourable alliances. “ The sacros recessus mentis,” the sacred fountains of our happiness, are not to be polluted by such contentions, nor are



we to lose the little tranquillity life affords.—Rivalships in trade are utterly destructive of the morals and learning of our profession; whatever practices are unbecoming, whatever a man of honour feels to be unworthy of his emulation, is unjust, unconstitutional.

No man, for example, will continue the study of the medical profession for twenty years, advance slowly and faithfully in reading and practice, combining carefully, as he goes along, experience and speculation, who sees throngs of ignorant, adventurous creatures rushing past him into practice: Then the profession becomes NOT A RACE, BUT A TUMULT, and all the legitimate objects of emulation, and all the inducements to study, and all its rewards, are at once abrogated and annulled.

If a young man, entering upon the world, with many natural fears and anxieties, finds, the moment that he has entered into a College of Physicians, that he is classed with men who are exposed to the most rancorous defamation! whose most secret transactions are divulged, who are openly reproached with want of principle, with want of veracity, with cunning and knavery! that his character, when it should begin to assume some importance, has to undergo this new ordeal in common with that of his fellow members; if he do not retire in prudence from such a profession, before he begin to waste his days in strife, will at least shrink back from any connection with a corporate body. Conduct like this is so ruinous to the character of the profession, and to the college in which it is allowed, that it

must dissolve all the usual bands of society ; individuals will decline, as full of danger and dishonour, those public connections which were once esteemed respectable.

Our profession has its constitution and laws, with which all your interests, and all the purposes of your life, are at variance : The constitution of our profession, and the peace of this city have been deeply wounded ; who but yourself will deny that it has ? Was it ever before known, that a Royal College of Physicians was traduced and belied, for not subscribing to the reasonings, or rather to the ravings, of a solitary fanatic ? That its most secret transactions were revealed, not in private whisperings, but in ample narrative, in the language of detraction, with every token of malice, hatred, and revenge, and with the avowed intention of dishonouring the society ? Was it ever before known, that by any individual under the title of a functionary, A CENSOR OF THE COLLEGE, its most inoffending members were reviled and calumniated ! In a profession, too, where good fame is not only the only object worth living for, but the very means of existence ? In relation to the peace of a city, was it ever known, that the fathers, sisters, and friends of any gentleman, were forced to read the most voluminous scurrilities, printed at enormous expence, and distributed gratis ? To find the most opprobrious epithets, the most infamous and lying accusations, applied to their dearest relations ? To hear the characters of those dear friends discussed in public companies, and their names coupled with the most lewd and

contemptible tales ! with indelicacies altogether unheard of in polished society till now ? If this be not ruin to the most useful profession, and the most respectable institutions, and to the peace of the city, I now not what can affect either public prosperity, or private happiness.

This you have done ! Whether with such a detestable conduct you have excited the indignation of your profession : whether physicians in other parts of the world will disavow your principles as much as many here detest your conduct, time will show : but this I know, that your conduct towards those innocent and inoffensive men, the most respectable in this city, has no apology in resentment for past injuries : You never were calumniated ! No one has ever invaded your rights, nor wounded your reputation ! Your rational views have never been interrupted ! not even your guilty interests, and rapacious dispositions opposed ! Even your most unprincipled calumnies have never been repelled, while all your works are quarto volumes of defamation, and each quarto a new act of unprovoked aggression.

You have no feeling for others, nor respect for that reputation for which every man, though he may be forced to endure in silence, is yet ready to expose his life, but have, with unexampled levity, traduced the worthiest men in this city. You are yet to learn, (to use the dignified and figurative language of Adam Smith) that, “as in the ancient mythology, that ground which was consecrated to some deity, could not be trodden upon except on some solemn and necessary occasion ; and the man who had even ignorantly violated

it, became piacular from that hour, until atonement should be made: so, by the wisdom of nature, is the happiness of every innocent man rendered holy, consecrated, and hedged round, not to be wantonly trod upon, not even to be ignorantly nor involuntarily violated, without expiation and atonement proportioned to the guilt."

"NUNC QUONIAM TUUM INSATIABILE EST INGENIUM, AT TU TUO SUPPLICIO DOCE HUMANUM GENUS, EA SANCTA CREDERE QUÆ A TE VIOLATA SUNT."

## LETTER X.

Dr GREGORY makes a most interesting discovery, viz. That he is the only man of talents, honour, or probity, in the Royal College of Physicians! Dr GREGORY, presuming on this discovery, publishes and circulates, to the inhabitants of this city, what he calls a *Censorian Letter*; and under the title of CENSOR, or Functionary of the College, divulgestheir most secret transactions, and proclaims the members a set of unprincipled cunning men! Dr GREGORY, the Metaphysician, by a certain construction of words, absolves himself from very solemn oaths, administered to every fellow of the College upon his entering into that society; and so describes the Fellows of the Royal College, that they “all show like gilt two-pences to him, who, in the clear sky of fame, o’ershines them as much as the full moon does the cinders of the element.”

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So much for philosophy, if one skilled as you are in the profoundest subtilties, can allow this plain deduction of professional duties from moral feelings to pass for philosophy! Now for facts.

It is my design, Sir, to compare your writings and conduct with the essential morals of our profession, and to enquire with what justice, under what pretexts, a man of your singular way of life, ventures to present himself before the public as a CENSOR of the conduct of professional men! disputing with a respectable college on a moral casue!



Sir, it is an invidious character, and a dangerous office: Through much depravity, and some obloquy, you had laboured onward to a disgraceful association with apothecary surgeons, such as your worthy father had marked as the extreme of meanness. When you were told in the streets by your busy associates, that the junior fellows of your own college, the College of Physicians, were enacting laws, by which they might, each in his own circle of society, attain some share of practice, your mean soul was all in alarm: The wildness and distraction of your manner betrayed the perturbed state of your faculties: You hunted for information through every despicable channel: Your curiosity and your enquiries knew no bounds; you learned some things in the streets, some by reports, some by conversations, but by far the most material you learned from your friend Mr George Bell. \*

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\* This man is so indelicate, as to inform upon all his informers, and quotes his authority for every little dirty tale or report he picks up in the streets; and it is singular that so much of this kind of information is from one individual, viz. his learned hospital clerk, that whenever he is at a loss to recollect the source of any petty piece of scandal, he refers it to him; witness the following anecdote:

“ I think it highly probable that this measure, (viz. the younger physicians seeking some means of entering into practice) had been under consideration, if not approved and adopted by that committee, many months before their report was laid upon the table. For some time last summer, as nearly as I can recollect, about six months ago, I heard something of such a plan being in agitation, from Mr Bennet, at that time President of the Royal College of Surgeons. I treated the information with contempt, as

You visited the individual members, and found them wonderfully little inclined to conversation with a man accustomed to misrepresent every conversation, and confound every fact. † But with a sagacity peculiar to yourself, you were careful to learn nothing from the printed minutes of the college, and so prodigiously delicate as to absent yourself from its meetings; for direct information would have put an end to indirect inquiry, and official truths have prevented that mode of representing facts in which your genius lies.

Ripe in all the arts of trade, “rich in expedients for inquietude,” you proceeded to investigate this deep laid plot, which threatened to raise the younger members into notice, and to deprive you and your copartnery of some share of practice: You indulged in those gloomy and brooding jealousies which have at last affected your reason: You dared to represent yourself as the only man of honour or principle in the respectable College of Physicians: You imagined yourself cheated, abused, excluded from what you in your distraction called the secrets of the college! as if it were possible for a great and respectable public body to have secrets; as if the most studied se-

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an absurd and malicious fiction, or, perhaps, a kind of scurvy joke upon our noble faculty, but I paid very little attention to it, so little, that I had forgotten from whom I had that intimation, and had even mistaken the name of the person from whom I had it, and thought I had received it from another member of that College, Mr George Bell.”

† This gentleman had the lie direct from Mr James Hope. Mr James Hope is not a professional man, and he declares, point-blank, that there is not one word of truth in Dr Gregory's report of a conversation with him. *Vide, Narrative by the Royal College of Surgeons, last page.*

crecy would elude the inquisitive researches of one accustomed to imagine every thing a secret, to hunt the most trivial report, and torture the most innocent circumstances into proof of damnable import, with the ingenuity of a state inquisitor, and the cunning of a jesuit!

You composed your Censorian Letter! You seemed in haste to convince the world, that public honours, and great and important duties, do not always elevate the mind: That from the highest and most dignified station a man may stoop to the lowest interests, and basest jealousies: That a splendid education may be bestowed on a mind unfit for culture, and incapable of any but mean thoughts: That the cares of a tender father might be lavished on one incapable of dignified sentiments; that the most approved modes of culture will operate no change on a low and vulgar intellect.

Could nothing elevate your sentiments above your base interests? Could not the recollection of that rank in your profession which, though not won by talents, but inherited, should have been precious to you, nor your father's memory, which should have been dear and sacred, inspire you with more dignified feelings than those which you have expressed in your CENSORIAN LETTER, addressed to a Royal College, and on a moral cause? Could you find virtue, honour, truth, or goodness, no where but in your own mind? Was there, in all your profession, nothing to respect nor praise; not one man, whose character for learning, talents, and virtue, might awe you into reflection, into self-examination? Was there nothing in your own delicate circumstances to

restrain you? You were involved in politics and alliances, sufficient to throw a shade of doubt over the life, the whole life of a physician. though of purer principles, and more amiable and gentle manners, than you can pretend to have. Your circumstances should have taught you modesty, and the increasing coldness of virtuous and learned men should have brought you to reflection and self-examination : But your low interests were at stake, your little soul in alarm, the trade of your associates was in danger, and the work of defamation was again to be renewed !

Happy had it been for yourself, and fortunate for your profession, had you felt, with dignified contempt, any thing unbecoming in the conduct of the College, and stood up in your place with virtuous indignation, reproving the offenders, or disputing their powers ; impressing with persuasive eloquence your father's maxims, and renewing in your own dignified conduct, the recollection of your father's manners, and proving the superiority of his precepts. Conduct like this, in a society of grave and learned men, of dignified and liberal manners, must have been irresistible. Had you acted thus with the honest zeal of one sincerely interested in the honour of his profession, and with the delicacy due to a public body, you would, when the secret of any cunning transactions had transpired, have been honoured by all the world, especially if you had, with dignity and composure, retired from an unbecoming scene, to cultivate your talents by private study, and to pursue your profession with self-denial, modesty, and charity.



How different all your conduct! You absented yourself from the meetings of the college, not from a sense of propriety and dignity; but that you might prove your contempt:—made indirect and cunning enquiries, that you might have it in your power to misrepresent what it was your duty to know:—affected ignorance, that you might have the privilege of being acquainted with just those facts that suited your purpose! Though notoriously engaged in the trade of medicine, you with unparalleled profligacy reproached your fellow members with cunning intentions, and unprincipled conduct! And you have, with a most uncommon depravity of disposition, selected from the lowest jest-books, the lowest tales, to degrade the college, and defame its younger members.

The eagerness to confound, subvert, and destroy, is conspicuous in all your writings. For this enmity to all order, and hostility to all good men, you may perhaps, in some future volume, condescend to assign a cause. The pleasure of degrading talents founded in sober and useful study, is natural; the confounding of order necessary to your interests; and the traducing of others your only chance, a slender one, God wot, of improving your own. Nothing doubtful of methods which you had found succeed so well on former trials, you resorted with confidence to your old favourite policy of distributing to the families in this city, secretly! clandestinely! gratis! a scurrilous pamphlet of 200 pages, under the lying title of CENSORIAN LETTER, under the unprincipled pretext of acting as a functionary of the college!



This, Sir, you did, in violation of decency, (that is with you a slight offence;) in violation of your natural allegiance to the college, which, as a man of honour, you should have felt; and in defiance of oaths solemnly administered, which admit of no evasion; of oaths which enjoin at once secrecy in regard to the affairs of the college, and respect to the feelings and reputation of the individual members. Those obligations of mutual respect are essential to the constitution of a college; they result from the very nature of the institution, which is to give stability and form to professional principles, and to enable the individual, upon entering into our profession, to participate in the general character of the society, and class himself with men honoured and respected in the world: When those oaths are no longer regarded, the essential purposes of the institution are abandoned

You are never seen in the attitude of one performing the duties of his office with composure, and dignity, moving by persuasion, and reproof in accents of mild and dignified remonstrance: Never demonstrating your superior talents, by enquiries useful to mankind, by excelling in your art, exciting useful emulation, or contending in science with the many able men that are your rivals in practice: Your occupation consists in contriving how to traduce their reputation! circulating with pernicious industry the most wicked calumnies against the most unoffending and innocent men! and, “like a mildewed ear, blasting your wholesome brother.”

“Men who attend the altar, and should most  
 Endeavour peace: Their strife pollution brings  
 Upon the temple itself,”

Your proficiency in the arts of slander, the world will readily allow ; but what must be the astonishment of men of good dispositions, when they learn the unworthy, the disingenuous sly pretexts, by which you have brought those thriving talents into action against your more immediate rivals ! Against the College of Physicians !—The oath administered to every candidate when he is received as a member of that body, is in these terms : “ I shall, as much as I can, advance and preserve UNITY, AMITY, and GOOD ORDER, among all the fellows, candidates, and lieentiates thereof ; and shall heartily wish, and endeavour to promote, the prosperity of them all, while they continue orderly and faithful to the college.”

“ I shall never divulge any thing that is acted or spoken in any meeting of the said college, or council, or court thereof, which I think may tend to the PREJUDICE or DEFAMATION of the SAME, or of ANY MEMBER THEREOF ! All the aforesaid articles I shall keep, and never willingly or wittingly break any of them, as I desire to be holden and reputed an honest man and a Christian.”

Was there ever a more solemn call on the conscience and feelings of a man, to temper his animosities, and subdue his jealousies ; to regard the reputation of his fellow members as sacred ; and respect and honour the society of which he had become a member ? Murder, or treason, or any intended crime, no oath can oblige us to conceal ; but the private transactions of a royal college are naturally sacred : The constitution of every society would be at an end, were its private consultations divulged :

Parliament, Corporations, Convocations of learned men, and even Courts of Justice, shut their doors (when they are to consult on matters of delicacy,) against all intruders; and I believe he would perform a dangerous office, who, being a member of a Corporate Body, should venture to publish in libellous quartos its private and close debates.

But it is your pleasure, as a metaphysician, to be absolved, *i. e.* to absolve yourself, from all forms of oaths, as well as from all respect to decency and morality: Yet, it is difficult to imagine how you can find an equivocation sufficient to satisfy even your own hollow conscience. You say, “that your oath is binding, in respect to the reputation and feelings of your fellow members only while THEY CONTINUE FAITHFUL TO THE COLLEGE.” Thus, on the construction of this word “FAITHFUL,” do you hang all the privileges of a corporate body; and on the import of that one word, constitute yourself, aye, YOURSELF ALONE! the paramount judge of the respect due to accepted oaths, signed and sworn, and of the observance due to the private interests and public character of that learned and respectable society!

You have thus combined, with all the subtilty of a metaphysician, the most ingenious expedients for inquietude; for it became manifestly your duty, first, to prove that your fellow members were a set of “cunning, unprincipled knaves,” (terms which you have applied with very little reserve,) in order to emancipate you from the moral obligation, and from this direct law! and in order to prove them “knaves,” it was necessary to promulgate the secret

devices and unprincipled proceedings of this Royal College!

By this new metaphysical rule of right, it was established, that whatever question was twice proposed, or keenly debated, or lost and won, the minority of the society, or Dr Gregory alone, if he chanced to be alone in that minority, was entitled to protest the greater number to be men untrue to the honour and interests of the college, and to publish a libellous history of their most private debates. It is most fortunate for society that the power of so wretched a metaphysician is limited like his knowledge, to words! words! else the most respectable institutions, and the acknowledged principles of political and moral obligation, might be dissolved.

There is, in the Royal College of Physicians, it would appear, an elective office, that of CENSOR, whose duties it would be natural to imagine, were consistent with the general spirit of its institutions, at least not at variance with its fundamental laws. That the CENSOR should, by being elected to that office, be absolved from his first oath of allegiance to the college, and from all respect to the feelings and to the reputation of his fellows; that such office should have been invented, in direct opposition to the first law of the association; and instituted for the express purpose of disclosing the most secret and delicate transactions of the college; for exhibiting that institution in the most ludicrous and odious posture to the world; and for traducing the individual members—are discoveries which only the talents of a deep and determined metaphysician could have brought to light!



The study of metaphysic is, I believe, the only one that stands protested by men of worth and feeling. It is, I am persuaded, the only one that could generate or evolve such unnatural and cruel propensities in the human mind. The admirable proficiency you have attained to in this science, and the uses to which you have applied it, will hardly redeem it from the opprobrium expressed by the first moralists of the present age,—Burke, himself a reputed member of a metaphysical religion, and no stranger to any of the human passions, inveighs against this instrument of cunning and hypocrisy; for such he describes it to be: “Nothing (says he) can be so hard as the heart of a thorough bred metaphysician: It comes nearer the cold malignity of a wicked spirit, than the frailty and passions of man: It is no easy operation to eradicate humanity from the human breast. What Shakespare calls the “compunctious visitings of nature,” will sometimes knock at our hearts, and protest against their murderous speculations. But they have a means of compounding with their nature; their humanity is not dissolved; they give it a long prorogation; and never, it is remarkable, see any way to their projected good, but by the road of some evil; their humanity is at their horizon, and like the horizon, it flies before them. These philosophers consider men in their experiments, no more than mice in an air pump, or in a reprecipient of mephitic gas.”

If Burke at all knew the temperament which metaphysics begets, and we are well informed of the general tendency of your studies, all wonder at your



conduct, your morals, or your writings, must cease. Possessed with the science of metaphysics, you are, of course, master of that difficult art, of eradicating humanity from the human breast: In the full force and whirlwind of your pride, the whisperings of conscience are disregarded, the still small voice is never heard; the weak suggestions of gentleness, the “compunctious visitings of nature,” manfully opposed, while you cultivate with proportioned care the turbulent and selfish passions, the “*noxia crimina cordi.*”

The function of Censor was no doubt invented still farther to insure the respectability of the college, and to strengthen, not to abrogate, its laws! to prevent members neglecting their duties, violating their oaths, or committing any act of imprudence which might, by some indirect channel, reach the public ear, and dishonour the College. The office of a CENSOR in the College of Physicians, like that of a MANAGER in the Royal Infirmary, conferred on you, who were elected ONE of the CENSORS, the privilege, though a long dormant one, of repressing improprieties of conduct, of reproving the members, or representing, in the quarterly meetings of the College, whatever you reckoned disreputable, but still with the delicacy becoming a gentleman, and the respect due to a public body. You were CENSOR within the walls of that College; but beyond its walls, where its interests and its duties were not in agitation, you were nothing! Within its walls you were entitled, perhaps you were called upon, to remind them of their duties; to rebuke them, since

your conscious integrity and disinterested temper, inspired you with such confidence in yourself, but not to calumniate! not to revile, in gratis pamphlets, all your natural rivals, as a nest of greedy unprincipled knaves! The disingenuous invention of circulating such calumny, under the title of a FUNCTIONARY OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE! was such a contrivance as no man could have fallen upon, but one thoroughly schooled in calumny!—one

“ Who spares no character, whose every word,  
Bitter as gall, and sharper than the sword,  
Stabs to the quick, whose thoughts with rancour swell,  
Whose tongue on earth performs the work of hell.  
If there be such a monster, the Reviews  
Shall find him holding forth against abuse.”

If there be not found in every page of this CENSORIAN LETTER, thoughts which incapacitate you for ever from being a reprover of morals, and expressions which no gentleman educated in polite society could allow himself to use, or willingly to read!—If this attack upon all that remained of your professional rivals untraded, be not such as exposes you justly to every kind of retaliation, except the flat expedient of copying your language, and falling to cursing like a very drab—may I be alone injured in the opinion of honourable men!

“ —————Should I relent,  
Yet public reason just compels me now.”

You were invested in the year 1804, along with Dr James Hamilton, a gentleman of amiable and respectable character, one of the Censors of

the Royal College: Why you did not invite your Colleague to assist you in its arduous duties, it were needless to enquire. Your first salutation to your fellow-members, far from being courtly, was in these remarkable words: "Since they will have me for censor, they shall have me for censor: I can assure them with perfect truth, I would rather act as a WHIPPER-IN to a HERD OF SWINE possessed by a LEGION OF DEVILS! than a Censor to a College of Physicians, or to any society of men, who needed such CENSORIAN admonitions as at present it is my duty to give them."

Nor is such language addressed the solely to younger members of the college: your abuse is directed against the whole,—“universal reproach, far worse to bear than violence.” For this I have the authority of an honest and worthy man, and through him the authority of the College. “When Dr Gregory boldly affirms, as he has done, though not in express terms, yet in the strongest language, that Dr Monro senior, Dr Hamilton senior, and Dr Rutherford, (as well as Dr Spence, Dr Hope, and Dr Duncan) were guilty of base injustice, I wonder he did not pause.” \*

—No, in his calumnious warfare, there is no pause, no intermission; “nec mora, nec requies;” he accuses the most respectable men in our city of “indirect and crooked ways!” of “outwitting and deceiving their colleagues!” of “de-

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\* Vide Opinion and Speech delivered by Dr Duncan senior, in the College of Physicians, page 7.

liberate and long-continued concealment!" of "chicanery and deceit!" of "astonishing misinterpretation and deliberate falsification of their laws!" He accuses them not only of a total dereliction of honesty, candour, veracity, and every moral feeling, but of cheating in concert, till at last they are ashamed to look one another in the face! He declares that they have no one trait of modesty or decency about them, except that of blushing at their common depravity and concerted villainy, looking at one another like a society of rooks. "If, after the experience which they have had of one another in this business, the individuals who compose that committee EVER TRUST ONE ANOTHER AGAIN, in any case in which their INTERESTS OR PASSIONS ARE CONCERNED, it must be thought miraculous. \* "But that their colleagues, on whom they have endeavoured to steal a march, (*i. e.* Dr Gregory, and Dr Gregory alone,) by outwitting and deceiving them, *shall* † ever trust them again, is impossible."

Your threats and denunciations are of a nature peculiar to yourself, and they are expressed in language which at no time disgraces the sentiment. "When

\* *Censorian Letter*, page 13, where this word *miraculous*, and every other abominable expression, is printed in Italics, that the ladies to whom this precious volume was liberally circulated, might perceive, as Dr Duncan says, that "He was an amazingly clever fellow."

*Dr Duncan's Letter.*

† It must be recollected, that this Metaphysical Professor is miraculously ignorant of English grammar.

the foul fiend (of contention, I believe you mean, or party spirit) is cast out, I can assure my brethren that a very moderate doze of this powerful medicine (viz. your own wonder-working scurrility) a single leaf, I presume, faithfully perused, and properly applied, will effectually prevent the said foul fiend entering into them again; and if ANOTHER AND LARGER EDITION of it, (viz. the Censorian Letter,) shall be wanted, I SHALL take care to provide it, for their benefit."

EH! GRATIS? MOST LIBERAL PROFESSOR!

"When, in their utmost need, they so wisely put the rod into my hand, it would have been a sin not to *apply* \* it vigorously to the 'PLACE APPOINTED BY NATURE!' especially when they EXPOSED THE SAID PLACE! SO FULLY TO PUBLIC VIEW†!"

"If they shall seriously think I have done them any injury, the LAWS of their country will afford them ample redress. They will easily find *abundance* ‡ of lawyers able and willing to—what for,

\* This unfortunate person is occupied in "adding more, to this most worthless, most superfluous store!" He is at this moment occupied in "reprinting (according to a very insulting advertisement,) his CENSORIAN LETTER, adorned with a preface, and ENRICHED with notes. The reader will soon be persuaded, that, even in its SIMPLE AND NAKED STATE, it is ABUNDANTLY RICH.

† The Professor's grammar is always so peculiar, that it would require as much as his morals to be illustrated by metaphysics.

‡ This great philologist, who writes on the tenses of Greek verbs, is wonderfully ignorant of the use of English ones.



a ducat! TO CLAPPERCLAW ME! seeundum artem; and I have no doubt that I shall find others equally able and willing to perform the same very necessary operation on them; but if not, rather than so good a work should be left undone, I WILL DO IT MYSELF!" (Oh great and able lawyer!)

"They shall be soon and very effectually convinced of their mistake, by finding their proceedings diseussed with VERY GREAT FREEDOM IN A COURT OF JUSTICE!"\* (A second Daniel!)

"Even the beginning of a law-suit, such AS I HAVE IN VIEW! will fully prove and make known those facts which for many good reasons I AM MOST ANXIOUS TO PUBLISH!" (A second Daniel! yea, a second Daniel!)

"If such lawsuit ever have an end, it must be either that the law WILL EAT THE OYSTER, and give each of us a shell, WHICH WILL ADMIRABLY ANSWER MY PURPOSE! of ESTABLISHING and making generally known SOME VERY IMPORTANT FACTS!!!" &c. †

Surely, Sir, you are most welcome to express, in whatever rude coarse language you please, your treacherous design of irritating the College to some public act of retribution. Your intention of fastening a quarrel upon them; and making the great and respectable power of the law, a new and cunning means of defamation. These inventions plainly relate to yourself, and correspond with all that we have at any time known concerning your dispositions: but when you put like indecent expressions in the

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\* Gregory's Censorian Letter. † Ibid. p. 127.

name of a respectable College, they are very unsuitable.

“ Much may be said (viz. hypothetically, by the Royal College of Physicians) in favour of such sentiments; in favour of substituting a vote for law, and good faith, and reason, and honour and duty: that we are a parcel of INSUFFERABLE, MUSTY OLD DRONES, IS UNDENIABLE! and many plausible things may be said to convince us, that if we had any notions of good manners or common decency, we should be ashamed to be seen out of our COFFINS: But our younger brethren should have considered that, old, and musty, and crabbed as we are! some of us have *tongues!* and some of us have *pens!!!*” \*

I imagined that your ambition had gone no higher than imitating the language and manners of Drawcansir, who “ snubs up kings without the slightest regard to decency, good manners, or justice.” But behold, you emulate the manners of Hotspur, Bobadil, and Drawcansir, all in a breath: This! why this is the express dialect of ancient Pistol, the valourous Pistol! “ Things must be as they may be: men may sleep, and they may have their throats about them at the same time; and some say knives have edges” “ and some of us have *tongues!* and some of us have *pens!*” From the pens of such Evangelists, and the tongues of such Apostles, “ deliver us good Lord.”

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\* *Censorian Letter*.—This man, a Professor by hereditary right, is surely below the rank of a school-boy in natural wit or acquired talents: He actually marks *tongues* and *pens* with Italics as wit!

“ I therefore am humbly of opinion, that it would have been more prudent, as well as more becoming in our young friends (the same gentlemen, whom, in a former volume, you proved by much metaphysic to be old professors) to have waited patiently till they had fairly paid us the last duties, and sung *Te Deum* ! and decently danced a cotillon ! over our graves !!! But they are knaves (says the delicate Professor) they deceive us, and cheat one another. “ My dear Jenny, (said a fond keeper to his wench) this is the third time you have poxed me.” The fool had no right to make even that gentle remonstrance : he deserved what he met with for trusting her so often ; no man is obliged to receive that favour more than once from any DOXY IN CHRISTENDOM ; and, for my own part, I should not wish to receive it more than once from the lovely Thais herself, were she to revisit earth in all her charms. Some wicked lawyers have presumed to maintain (for which I hope their wives have rewarded them properly) that even in the holy state of wedlock, a man is not entitled to complain, nor to get rid of his wife,” &c. \*

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\* Vide *Censorial Letter*, page 13. This is another most singular proof of the seasonableness of that advice which I gave the delicate Professor, of cultivating his memory, as a needful corrector of his tales. This is the tale which he told (page 100) of a gentleman and his wife, which he now tells of a blackguard and his doxy. Yet there is less incongruity than one would imagine at first sight ; for the tale belongs to the delicate Professor, who surely is entitled to make the most of his own wit. To “ adorn” it with what personages,

Is this, Sir, the language you dare address to a Royal College of Physicians? Is this your conception of wit, these the fruits of your classical studies? Is this, Sir, to fit you for being that sober, honourable, and respectable character, which the world expects in a physician: Is this to prepare you for being

sonages, and “enrich” it with whatever circumstances he listeth, and to repeat it as often as he likes in prose or in verse! This is a subject so congenial with the Professor’s taste, that he has dressed up this exquisite morceau in such verse as would excite any man but himself to distraction.

Rem carmine signo.

#### DOXIES AND POXES,

*An approved and excellent new Song, by Dr James Gregory.*

*Metaphysician, Professor of the Practice of Physic, &c. &c.*

If to think of claps and poxes,  
Pounds of pills, and ointment boxes,  
Made it safe to woo our DOXIES.

Then to purify our DOXIES,  
Wise it were to think of poxes,  
Claps and salivating boxes.

But if thought of *future* poxes,  
Salves and pills of *future* boxes,  
Cannot change our *present* DOXIES.

Why suspect the blooming DOXIES,  
Let the Surgeon bring his boxes,  
If we *catch* he’ll *cure* our *poxes*.

No. xxi. of a *gratis* Volume of Poems.

Such occupations as this are not forbidden to a Physician in Dr Gregory’s father’s book; nor do I find any authority from the times of Aristotle or Quintilian to those of Campbell, for criticising

the companion, the friend, of any gentleman, to whom his most sacred feelings may be safely entrusted? Sir, you have insulted the society of Edinburgh with obscenities circulated gratis, such as never could be received for wit in the lowest club of mechanics, in the last stage of a weekly debauch.\* Go, Sir: I will not pollute my page with the name suitable to so depraved and contemptible a being: Such wit and such reasoning is an eternal disgrace to our profession and to our medical school; and we can only wonder in what society you have learnt a language, which degrades you as far below the rank of a scholar, as the untruths of which you stand convicted, by the unanimous sentence of your college, degrade you below the rank of a man of honour: From your high hereditary rank, the son of Dr Gregory, the professor the physician, you have fallen,—“What a pernicious height!”

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ing such poetry as this severely; indeed, like much of his wit, it is, in my opinion, of a kind that CARRIES ITS OWN APOLOGY ALONG WITH IT

\* I know not how these things may affect the delicacy of those parents and guardians, into whose hands the Professor thrusts these delicious morceaux GRATIS: But I think they are not unworthy of the notice of the society for the SUPPRESSION OF VICE. The Professor thought fit to honour with an unexpected morning call, a Right Reverend Bishop, a man of unaffected purity of mind, a scholar and a gentleman; and, at taking leave, laid upon his table what he called a collection of HIS EPIGRAMS! a small octavo volume of such poetry as I have just quoted, from which worthless and senseless performance the bishop tore out with indignation this delicious epigram, which I have here REPRINTED, but the volume is extant and now in circulation, it was distributed gratis last year.



You have talents so diversified, such a profusion of wit, humour, naïvetè, as no limited number of quotations can enable an admirer such as I am to represent. You have the happy talent of traducing all the individual members of every college, under the pretext of addressing the general body ; and you usually are enabled, not by any subtilty, but by sheer abuse, to scandalize two colleges at once : Thus,—

“ Few patients, I believe, would choose to eat of the rolls, or drink much of the ale, that were baked or brewed by the fellows of our Royal College ; and I should not be one of the few, UNLESS I WERE VERY HUNGRY INDEED ! and could not PROCURE bread baked by more skilful hands : Yet bread we all know is the staff of life, and almost as necessary as physic for both physicians and their patients. I take it for granted, that the Worshipful Company of Bakers, and the very respectable Society of Brewers, would not be much alarmed at our just encroachment on their respective provinces, and that they would not hastily take up arms to repell our invasion ; but would content themselves with laughing at us, or perhaps inviting and encouraging us to play the FOOL,\* till we were heartily tired of it : † Again,—

“ One day lately, finding the worthy President of that College (viz. the College of Surgeons) in the humour of being very merry at the proposed plan of some of our members eking out their profession of a physician, with the addition of a little of the apo-

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\* The learned professor is seldom very fortunate in any of his CONSTRUCTIONS.

† Censorian Letter.

thecary craft, I took the liberty to ask him whether he had any OBJECTIONS to my practising a little tooth-drawing on my patients? He answered me, with a LOUD LAUGH, (the wit and the courage of Dr Gregory and his friends is always LOUD, and always in the streets,) that he had no OBJECTIONS, § and that I was heartily weleome. I thought my question a very fair and pertinent one, (and extremely witty and familiar,) for the worthy President is unquestionably the BEST TOOTH-DRAWER IN THE WORLD; so admirable in that profession, that if my tongue were palsied," &c.

Not satisfied with this exquisite jest with the TOOTH-DRAWER and the College of Surgeons! you come next to the HANGMAN and the College of Physicians! "If many of our members shewed an eager desire to HANG THEMSELVES! but could not find the means! some of our good friends would gladly FURNISH THEM WITH ROPES; and as to their most devoted servant, I suppose a dozen or two of them might fairly sing me in grand chorus, but in the most *affectuoso* style, the tender farewell of Lucy to her dear Maeheath—

"When you come to the tree, should the hangman refuse,

"These fingers with pleasure shall fasten the noose!!!"†

You seem to have adopted implicitly the belief of Launeelot, who declares himself to be of opinion, "That a man is never to be reckoned undone till he is hanged!" "The terror of being undone in this cruel

\* Censorian Letter, p. 50

† Ibid.

§ The Professor is very ignorant of grammar.

and irretrievable way, is ever uppermost in your thoughts ; and the fear of the devil, the terror of the gallows, and the scenery of bedlam, are perpetually haunting your imagination, perhaps, from an inward consciousness of corresponding propensities in your moral nature ; for, from the first, the “ devil ! ” “ as bad as the devil ! ” “ worse than the devil ! ” “ hanging me ! ” “ hanging themselves ! ” “ and all hanged together ! ” are expressions with which each of your great and tragical pieces of oratory closes.

In writing your character of yourself, it was not possible for you to escape from your own obloquy, or to hide your own fears : “ He, (Dr GREGORY), knows accordingly, that some of his professional brethren would be VERY GLAD to see him HANGED ! and he would not remain very long inconsolable if the apotheosis of some of them were performed ; or, if they were to perform it themselves in that ignoble manner.”\* “ If I were to say all that I think on this point, I should expect, that some of my professional brethren would immediately put me in a strait waistcoat, and send me off post to Dr Willis.” †

With the help of the judge, Sir, the thing may be very fit to be done. I am only surprised at your entering so justly into a consultation, as to your own state of mind ; and estimating so truly the distraction which you have not yet disclosed. It would be a most natural office for your private friends, who

\* Infirmary Memorial, p. 222. † Censorian Letter, p. 89.

think pretty nearly as you yourself do, of your condition ; for ten long years, as far as I recollect, you have been troubled, and not without reason, with these thick coming fancies. When you propose that the thing should be done by your profession, which plainly belongs to your friends, it must be on the ground of its being a general benefit and a public duty.

These extracts, Sir, I owe to you, and to the public, as specimens of your purest sentiments, and the most innocent of your wit ; but it is not the most lively ! by no means : “ Continuo Crassum ridet Vulfenius ingens.”

The following specimen of your wit is unique, and my quoting it must be very flattering to you :

“ At my next visit, finding my patient (viz. another voting President of the College of Surgeons, another transported surgeon’s clerk, and shining ornament of science <sup>1</sup>) quite desponding : I exhorted him to be of good cheer, to get up on his legs again, and go out and CLAPPERCLAW HIS BRETHREN ; he said he never would go near them again. I told him he must ; and asked him if he knew what they said of him, and his illness. He declared he did not know, and did not care.” (Was ever polite and elegant conversation so exquisitely represented !) “ I then, to the great astonishment of a Learned Judge who was present, (happy the Learned Judge who has such companions !) and, I presume, thought I was gone mad ! (very possibly) told the patient that his brethren dated his complaint,” &c.

“ This hint operated as a charm far more powerful than a hundred weight of James’s powders !

“ The first good symptom I *saw* in my patient, was a vehement declaration,—“ If I get upon my legs again, I’ll twist the noses of some of your friends for that !” This gave me great hopes of him ; but, in less than two days, a still more favourable occurrence ensured his recovery. When I called on him, I found him still in extreme weakness and great pain ; but he asked me with much spirit,—“ Do you know what those RASCALS were doing last night ?” “ No. I know nothing about them ! They were serenading me last night ! playing ridiculous tunes, such as “ Johnny’s gray breeks.”—“ I’ll clout my Johnny’s grey breeks for a the ill he’s done me yet ! and giving me three cheers at the end of them ! ! !”

“ This kind and friendly attention, AS HE CONCEIVED, on the part of his brethren, seems to have done the business ! for, from that hour, he has continued uniformly to recover ! and I trust will soon be able to return them, THE compliment of THE serenade with two dozen of BAG-PIPES ! ! !”\*

This, Sir, from a Physician ! a Writer of Consultations, a Lecturer on Medical Practice ! a Reformer of the morals of his profession, and the manners of his respectable colleagues ! Is this wit ? No, Sir, but it is mirth !

“ The broadest mirth unfeeling folly wears ”

In what rank of society such coarse, obstreperous wit can find admirers,—in what rank of society such modes of thinking and forms of expression may have

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\* Censorian Letter, p. 100.



been acquired, it would be difficult to conjecture. The talents displayed in all your writings, are, I confess, out of the line of my ambition, and beyond my comprehension.

Every man who pretends to propriety of thought or purity of language, sets before himself some favourite writer as a model, or selects certain works as peculiarly worthy of imitation. You seem to have gone through this part of your education with very independent feelings, and a very transcendent confidence in your own unassisted genius; and have succeeded accordingly. If there be, in any of your writings, modesty or purity of thought; delicacy, propriety, or energy of style, I have lived long in a great mistake in regard to the authors whose works I have delighted to peruse; which no way resemble yours: Though I have lived in no small danger, by being obliged sometimes to read your facetious volumes, of learning to imitate them, I hope I have hitherto been able to avoid any palpable invasion of your prerogative: You have formed a language for yourself, combining the most shameless and offensive levity,—the most abandoned obscenity,—the most ludicrous and heavy pedantry,—coupling tales and bon-mots from Joe Millar, with quotations from Lucretius, Ovid, and Virgil;—though Petronius is the bard of your imagination.

You have indeed thought fit to gild your pages with various parcels of literature, but they make no part of your work, and only prove, that, by the care of your parents, you have been taught

to read what you could not relish: That you have not been fed, but inflated with learning. Crude conceptions and confused recollections, form a very heterogeneous composition,—You do not apply, translate, nor imitate, but flash and flounder amidst an ocean of words, which you call Memorials, with a noble contempt of all the methodical stupifying writers of past or present times. You entertain that pleasing opinion of your own splendid and peculiar talents, which is wittily quoted by your predecessor Martinus, “ That none but yourself can be your parallel.”

To this peculiar style, to this lingua franca of the Poissardes, and the regions of Parnassus, you have the justest title that ever any author had. It is your own, and you hold it by a tenure, which it would be equally dangerous and disreputable to invade.

The language of polite society, without the aid of learning, might have taught you that propriety and correctness in composition which is so common in our times, and which we find in the letters even of a girl; for feeling and natural taste regulate the subjects of her correspondence, and her ear is tuned by the tone of polite conversation. You also must have lived sometimes in polished society, but surely you have lived in it as in a foreign country, with all the antipathies of your peculiar and home-bred nature rankling against the inhabitants, and with a wonderful spirit of resistance against all infections of politeness and urbanity? Against these you have the same natural abhorrence, that many have against the lan-

guage as well as the religion of foreign nations. The good old lady Strange being congratulated by her friends in Scotland, after sojourning half her life in France and Italy, on the happy opportunities she had enjoyed of acquiring a variety of languages without toil or thought, replied, with supreme contempt of such acquirements, "Italian! French! na deela word!—ha nae I had'n well out?"

Some of the consequences of this independent spirit, you have not rightly calculated, which is the reason of your surprise at things the most natural that can be imagined, which, natural though they be, have yet excited the tempest and whirlwind of your passions. You were surprised to find that Dr Hope resigned "so easily" your esteem, confidence, and friendship, and the ebullition of resentment which his conduct excited, provoked you to discover, in a moment, all your most secret opinions, concerning "CONSTANCY IN FRIENDSHIP," and many other delicate matters; sentiments such as no moralist from Seneca to Samuel Johnson, from Richardson to Miss Edgeworth, ever before imagined.

"But I am not of the humour to sit down and cry for the loss of a friend, like A CHILD FOR THE LOSS OF A PLAY-THING. Full forty years ago, I have learnt maxims which I have followed ever since. At any rate, I can neither blame my QUONDAM FRIEND; nor complain of him. EVERY MAN OUGHT TO CHANGE HIS FRIEND! as he would his SHOEMAKER! WHEN HE FINDS HE DOES NOT FIT HIM!" (his shoes, you mean, or else your verbs are again out of joint; for

though men wear shoes, they do not wear shoe-makers;" (for every man is entitled to have a FRIEND as well as a DOG to his MIND' This a great philosopher thinks to be the final cause of the vast variety of dogs! and I believe men are as different as dogs! But if a man can, by losing one friend, gain four, or gain as friends the majority of a Royal College of Physicians, (a whole hunting pack of friends,)—he certainly makes an excellent bargain; for whether friends are to be taken BY TALE, LIKE GUINEAS! or by weight, like BUTTER! and CHEESE! the balance must be greatly in his favour! It was altogether my fault, not to have foreseen and been prepared for such a change. Every man of science," &c.\* *Hic multa preternitto pudoris gratia.* There is no reason for reading the story of your dear Jenny more than once.

"In the course of many years intimate acquaintance, my QUONDAM friend, I dare say, must have found in me many strong repellent principles (no doubt, Sir,) probably more than enough to account for this complete separation, (more than enough, Sir,) and whether it be so, or not, I cannot wonder or complain that so excellent a chemist should obey the fundamental laws of CHEMICAL RELATION! and renounce the closest union with ANY BODY, as soon as he came within the sphere of action of another, to whom he felt a stronger attraction, or a closer natural affinity."†

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\* Vide Censorian Letter.

† Ibid.



“ At si cognatos, nulla natura labore  
Quos tibi dat retinere velis servareque amicum  
Infelix operam pergas.”

You have entered deep into the morals of our profession, and quite as soundly have you studied the principles of friendship; but, partly by your habits, and partly by your practices, you have come very oddly to confound this very independent word Friendship with the word Partnership, and have learnt to estimate friendships, like reputations, at their true value, viz. “ at what they will bring.”

You have written inimitable things too about romance, and Lord Moira, and the romantic and chivalrous spirit of a gentleman, concluding, in your own peculiar stile of romance. \* “ I conceive it to be some portion of that kind of ROMANCE which constitutes the character of a gentleman: and that the man who has not in himself romance, is fit for TREASONS, STRATAGEMS, and SPOIL! The motions of his soul are dull as night, and his affections dark as Erebus.” “ Let no such man be trusted.” But I do not remember to have heard even of one instance of a man, who, after once failing in probity and veracity, ever acquired or regained the character of a gentleman. If Lord Moira were to do so, I apprehend he must set like stars that fall to rise no more. In this respect the character of a gentleman is almost as delicate as the chastity of a woman. “ Si paulum summo decessit vergit adimane;” or, as the swinish

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\* Viz. with these words, “ Once a whore, and always a whore.”



vulgar express it, in their language, "Once a whore and always a whore, by the courtesy of England."\*

Happy and fortunate the "noble lords and learned judges" who are thus favoured with that familiar and elegant conversation, which, as you say, Dr Willis is so much better entitled to enjoy, and which grave and learned Professors, the Lord knows why, reject.

You have, Sir, I doubt not, the very feelings of being the first gentleman in this city, the only one in this College, distinguished for romantic virtues and polished manners; just as our patients have the persuasion of being still endowed with toes and fingers, legs and arms, which they have left behind them in the field of battle, or yielded as trophies to our surgical skill: But the practical lessons which they are sure to receive, if ever they attempt to rest upon those imaginary limbs, are not unlike those which you have of late sustained, not with a very patient and placid spirit, when attempting to sustain yourself upon your imaginary virtues.

Dr Hope, you do him the justice to say, "is a man of talents, and learning, and science; a good physician, an excellent chemist, an able professor, and one of the CHIEF PILLARS of OUR MEDICAL SCHOOL." "I own (you say) I was surprised to find, that he renounced so easily my esteem and friendship."† Have you not some apprehension that virtue is inseparable from talents; have you no inward persuasion, that a man of talents, learning and science, and a good physician, has many CHANCES and many MOTIVES

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\* Censorian Letter, p. 90.

† Ibid. p. 106.

for being a man of honour, a man of strict probity and veracity? Indeed, Sir, you have drawn strange unlogical conclusions from the state of your own faculties and propensities. I am persuaded that real talents and virtue are inseparable; it is sure, at least, that a man who after bestowing half his life in cultivating high talents, would be in one point extremely weak, who allowed himself to become a little and a cunning rogue; and would sell his birth-right for a mess of pottage.

“ A powerful understanding (says Godwin) is inseparable from eminent virtue ;” and it must be remembered, that vicious conduct is always the result of narrow views. A man of powerful capacity and extensive observation is least likely to commit the mistake either of SEEING HIMSELF AS THE ONLY OBJECT OF IMPORTANCE, or of conceiving that his own advantage may be best promoted by trampling on that of others.” Perhaps, Sir, it is exactly because Dr Hope is “ a man of learning, talents, and science, and a good physician,” that he abandons your society with so little reluctance.

It is not always by going with the mob, that a man acts either most virtuously or most prudently ; but I do protest that, on the present occasion, I think Dr Hope has acted both with prudence and honour, in place of being detached from you by those ELECTIVE ATTRACTIONS which certainly you, of all people, best understand, he is, according to my apprehension, guided by the plainest moral sympathies of approbation and aversion. Surely, if the profanity, obscenity, and ribaldry, that contaminate

your writings, pollutes your ordinary conversation, you are unfit company for any gentleman ! especially for a physician ! To any man, whose talents have raised him to be " one of the pillars of the medical school," your society must be dangerous and offensive.

Nothing seems to you conclusive, which comes not in something of a logical form : I beg therefore you will examine well the converse of this proposition, and take that proof which arithmeticians do, when they sum up their columns of figures the wrong way from the TOP to the BOTTOM : Consider, Sir, who your close and steady friends are ; those " shoes" and slippers on which you shuffle and straddle through your practice : Note them, Sir. Though you have told us of some of these friends who have had very high and distinguished education under you in the hospital, they are not exactly esteemed PATTERNS OF " ROMANCE," " NOR PILLARS OF MEDICAL SCIENCE ! I leave you to tell what they are ! " I leave you among three or four logger heads, sounding the very base string of humility."

Your profession is now emancipated from the terror of your accusations, by their absurdity ; and individuals indifferent at the least to your calumny. In all your writings, you affect a singular degree of public spirit, as if only the most generous motives could animate you !—as if a detestation of knavery ! an intolerance of vice !—a pure and perfect love of your profession inspired you ! Are these the PURE MOTIVES of your intrigue in the College of Sur-

geons,—of your quarrels in the College of Physicians,—of your insults to individuals,—of your bitter invectives against your rivals, and against the pillars of our medical school? Are ribaldry, indecency, and scurrility, your most sacred censorial duties; and defamatory quartos, circulated in secret, the means of reforming that abandoned College,—of retrieving its lost reputation, and restoring peace? Is there in that College but one man of honour, veracity, or talents? Is THAT MAN DR GREGORY? You have told the public that the College of Physicians are, besides their knavery, so low in comprehension, that they know not the very terms in which scholars like you express a DILEMMA! You have said to the public, “Either I or my accusers, (viz. the Royal College of Physicians) have been lying abominably!” “I or my accusers, and A LARGE PORTION of my brethren, who are of course to be my judges on this occasion, must have been LYING ABOMINABLY, and acting most KNAVISHLY FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS PAST!”

In such delicate and curious terms have you propounded a Dilemma, which all the malignant part of the College, (viz. the whole, with exception of yourself and your partner,) and it is to be hoped all the sensible part of the community, will think of very dispassionately, and with perfect good humour; and neither the College of Physicians, nor the Assembly of Divines, for whose knowledge of reasoning you express equal contempt, will be at all at a loss on which of the horns of this Dilemma they should hang the trophies of Dr Gregory’s logic.



Indeed, Sir, when you recover from that confusion of mind, which quarrelling has created, and the unwise fomentation of metaphysics has exalted to a dangerous degree, you will find this to be a very simple arithmetical problem; and that the CHANCES ARE ABOUT THIRTY TO ONE AGAINST YOUR BEING EITHER A WISE OR AN HONEST MAN!

When I think of the difficult enterprise you have undertaken; and how confidently you have expected to make all other physicians show like gilt twopences compared with you, I find, in the difficulties and dangers of the enterprise, (for this enterprise has its dangers,) strong apologies for any ill success.

Success you surely deserve, for you are bold: and bravery deserves success! The spirit of the braggart knight breathes in every page of your Memorials: "Let it, I beseech you, (says Sir John in the pride of his achievements,) be booked with the rest of this deeds, or by the Lord I will have it in a particular ballad else, with my own picture on the top of it, TO THE WHICH COURSE IF I BE ENFORCED, IF YOU DO NOT ALL SHOW LIKE GILT TWOPENCES TO ME, and I in the clear sky of fame o'ershine you as much AS THE FULL MOON DOES THE CINDERS of the element, which shew like pin-heads to her, believe not the word of the noble; Therefore let me have right, and let desert mount!"



## LETTER XI.

The Author enters into a discussion with Dr Gregory of the PRINCIPLES of TRADE: The Doctor sinks the absurd and pompous titles of Professor, Gentleman, and Physician, in the laudable and familiar appellation of PRACTITIONER; and cuts short all hope of competition, by declaring point-blant, that “ he had the unspeakable advantage! of learning the principles of trade in the CENTRE of the CITY of ABERDEEN :”—Dr Gregory, Professor of Practice, instructs younger practitioners “ to estimate character at its real value; viz. WHAT IT WILL BRING;”—like the Jew’s razors, made, not for shaving, but for selling:—Dr Gregory discusses the question of Fees, and inveighs especially against the smallness of those given to BOERHAAVE; some say eighteen pence a visit, some say a groat:—He concludes his CENSORIAN ADMONITIONS, by informing the Citizens of Edinburgh, that the YOUNGER FELLOWS of the COLLEGE of PHYSICIANS, are fellows ready to creep, nay, actually “ creeping down the chimneys, and up the COMMON SEWERS,” groping for such vile trash.

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HONOUR AND INNOCENCE are invulnerable, and if I have but imagined accusations against a respectable and virtuous man, which the opinion of my profession does not warrant, the punishment will fall heavy on me indeed, “ even shame, the last of evils.”

I shall taunt you no more with admiration of your romantic delicacy, of which I have given specimens which will not be soon forgotten; nor of those romantic virtues which have involved you in warfare with your designing, cunning colleagues of the Royal College, but come with you to the fair and honest discussion of the PRINCIPLES OF TRADE. There is

a period in familiar and confidential conversation, when even the shy and wary diplomatist, comes plainly to the point; and you and I have passed so long a time in confidential intercourse, that I hope I do not, at this period of our commerce, offend your romantic delicacy by speaking of trade.

Come, then, OF TRADE:—You should know something on this subject: It would be rude and blunt to invite you all at once to display your principles; but consider, Sir, you have abandoned many idle and pompous circumstances, natural to your rank in society, for useful occupations! You are a PRACTITIONER! under which familiar appellation, the absurd pomp and gravity of the Professor and Physician are forgotten at a most propitious moment, and the theory of your life happily accommodated to the temper of the times.

“Why should a man, whose blood is warm within, sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?” Your active spirit was born for great enterprises, not to be domesticated by study, nor subdued by the slavish habits of a sluggish and torpid profession. You see, on looking around you, only men of still and formal mediocrity, who have no desire but to preserve the rules of decency, and live a studious irreproachable life! who propose, like Puritans, to “learn and labour truly to do their duty in that state in which it hath pleased God to call them.” You see only the Monros, and Rutherfords, and Homes, and Hopes, whose skill in physics is all the knowledge they can pretend to; whose morals are rather homely than ROMANTIC; whose deeds in literature or in huma-

nity, will be buried as the deeds of plain good men too often are, with their bones ; while yours will, I doubt not, remain a lasting example, if not a warning, to posterity.

It was impossible for the profession to see Dr Gregory prosper in trade, accomplishing things which his timid colleagues could not bear to look upon, without perceiving, that he had "unspeakable advantages." What these might be, whether any thing more fortunate than the accident of being hereditary Professor, and being born a Physician, it was impossible to conceive, till Dr Gregory himself disclosed that secret, which might well make every rival despair. It never entered into the heart of man to conceive, that from the very air he first breathed, he drew in those singular propensities and talents by which he now thrives ! When Dr Gregory, in the very heat of the fight, cries aloud, " I am a SCOTCHMAN GOOD, having the UNSPEAKABLE ADVANTAGE of being born in the CENTER of the CITY OF ABERDEEN,"\* he utters a truth as ominous and appalling to those who hope to thrive by honourable means, and as fatal to their hopes, as that of M'Duff to the usurper Macbeth, when he proclaims himself "untimely ripped from his mother's womb ! and cowed by that word, the better part of man in him."

Though it is useless to contend against destiny like this, it is some consolation to know, that you in part prevail by natural, though irresistible powers : † You explain, in another passage, without reserve, the peculiar dispositions and habits

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\* Censorian Letter, p. 77.

Ibid. p. 66.

on which you rely: "As to my dear countrymen, the ABERDONIANS, they have been long known to be very SHARP-FOLKS! so very sharp, that it has been estimated, that if their attornies (whom they sometimes call advocates, sometimes proctors, sometimes solicitors) were allowed to practise in London, they would, in seven years, have the fee-simple of the whole county of Middlesex; as far as I can judge, their medical GENTLEMEN ARE as sharp in their way, as their attornies can be for THEIR HEARTS! And on the point at present in question, I should trust more to their actual experience *pro* and *con*, than to all the dreams of my brethren in the College." †

You have thus successfully explained your predilection for trade, and your proficiency in it; and proclaimed yourself at once, the most unblushing pupil of such a school, and the most explicit defender of your COUNTRY'S MORALS, that ever issued from the North. But is it not a manifest cruelty, to reproach the members of this Royal College with the want of talents, which you confess that you yourself possess only by the fortunate circumstances of your birth? Is it not inhuman to accuse your fellow members of dreaming, while you are practising! to challenge them to trials of skill so unequal?

Besides your great and peculiar talents, you have incitements which others, if they have them, do not feel so deeply: You had, on one occasion, been careful to insult your younger brethren with the counsels of Solomon: (for next to Solo-

\* Vide Censorian Letter.

mon, you would be thought the greatest teacher of morals) “ They certainly must all know, for it is an observation of the wisest of men, that “ he that maketh haste to be rich, shall not be innocent ;” few have risen, and many have sunk never to rise again in public esteem, by too great, and too early, attention to their own pecuniary interests. \*”

Deeply as your candid and generous mind is impressed with this maxim, there is, it would appear, a period of life which brings a dispensation from this and all other honest maxims; which brings claims, paramount to all the dictates of virtue or honour. I find that, while you enjoined such strict rules to the younger part of the profession, you regarded yourself in this, as in other moral obligations, above all rule: “ There was a time, (you say) when I should have despised all their projects, and their masked batteries; but, as I have now, by some unlucky combination of accidents, GOT UPON THE WRONG SIDE OF FIFTY! I begin to feel that I have NO TIME TO LOSE! and as I have got FIVE INFANT SONS still to provide for! I find it very NECESSARY to mind the good MAIN CHANCE.” †

We understand your precepts as clearly as those of the son Sirach: You have, by birth and nature, strong talents, strong temptations, strong apologies, excellent opportunities, and most excellent connections! and you are arrived at that period of life, which forbids you to be nice or over delicate in your practices, which brings a dispensation from

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\* Censorian Letter, page 63. Ibid, page 96.



those rules of antiquated wisdom and moderation, so ill suited to modern times, and substitutes in their place a more pleasing duty, to “ be rich and virtuous if you can, but at all hazards to be rich.”

You are not merely ripe and hardened in the principles of trade, but have so pursued it through all its intricacies, as to be able to illustrate your subject by all the analogies of other professions, and even to give lessons of prudence, and teach the secret of thriving, to the very lowest: You are the only writer who, neglecting science, have written on trade: You have vehemently and violently called the attention of the public to this subject; you have not only accustomed yourself to think over all the intricacies of your own profession, but to expand your great and liberal views universally; so that the trades of the Brewers, Bakers, Tanners, and Butchers, Shoemakers, and TAYLORS, help you out, not only with quaint allusions, but with direct illustrations, rules, and inferences; and, if I am not mistaken, the lowest of these tribes, if, like the melancholy ox, they could read your memorials, would find themselves instructed in the best methods and deepest subtleties of their own professions. Your plans for the improvement of your own trade, are indeed so ripened, that I can recollect only one practical improvement more, that you can steal from the last of these, viz. the taylor, and that is, the establishing a HOUSE OF CALL.

To estimate character expressly according to what IT IS WORTH! to what IT WILL PRODUCE! seems to be your first and cardinal rule, which you exemplify

by the following lively anecdote : “ What would I give for that man’s character,” said a man of the world, when he saw the Lord Chancellor King passing in his coach : “ Why, what would you give for it ?” said his companion : “ Ten thousand pounds with pleasure.” “ Why so,” said the other, “ you know you could not keep it three days ?” “ True,” said the first, “ but in three days I could make 50,000*l.* of it.” Such men, though they may despise all considerations of character, as the object of enthusiastic attachment, or of *PRETIUM affectionis*, yet perceive that *UNBLEMISHED CHARACTER* has a certain value, *OR MARKET PRICE* :”

“ For the real value of a thing,  
Is as much money as it will bring.” \*

We understand you, Sir : You hold for your deliberate opinion, the moral of Peter Pindar’s fable to the Royal Academicians ; you “ make your character up for the ready market,” at the *MARKET PRICE* ! like the Jew’s razors, which were sold at eighteen pence a dozen, but which the itinerant ingenuously acknowledged, were made, not *FOR SHAVING, BUT FOR SELLING*.

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\* Censorian Letter, page 91. This illustrious writer has, by the fortunate coincidence of a just ear, and a delicate and cultivated taste, a perpetual tendency to write blank verse in his heroics, and rhyme, sometimes, in his lighter passages, and all the while he does not know it ; so little share has his vanity in all such accidental beauties : I have not here *TRANPOSED* his words, but merely printed in *MEASURE* what he had the modesty to indite in *FLAT PROSE*.

To consider well the relation of your own money-making trade, to other money-making trades, is another rule; to think of it, not as an improving science, instituted for the good of our fellow-creatures, but as a gainful profession, the chief end of which is DAILY BREAD; and, to illustrate it only by the most humiliating comparisons: (e. g.) “ We cannot permit or authorise any of our members to practise Pharmacy, even privately, and to dispense medicines to their own patients, any more than we can authorise them to practise surgery on the same patients, or THAN we can authorise them to have PRIVATE OVENS and BREW-HOUSES! and to BAKE HOT ROLLS, and to brew a LITTLE GOOD ALE! for the benefit or gratification of the same patients; and, with a view to raise themselves in public esteem, and to procure general and lucrative employment, I should not be one of the few, unless I were very HUNGRY IN-DEED,” &c. \*

“ I suspect also, that some of our young friends have not considered, that it is morally impossible for any large proportion of those who may choose to try their fortune in a great town, to rise to eminence, or acquire extensive and lucrative practice,” &c. “ which is the true origin, and rational foundation of the common remark, that a physician cannot get bread, till HE HAS NO TEETH TO EAT IT! This point was well explained some hundred years ago, when men wore long beards,” &c. †

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\* Censorian Letter, p. 48.

† Ibid, p. 37. followed

by a long story from Joe Miller, about LONG BEARDS and the POPE'S PHYSICIANS!

Anxious only to illustrate and instruct your reader, you show a noble disregard of those paltry observances which might impede you; “EMPLOYMENT and FEES, and DAILY BREAD! are the sole objects of your speculations; throughout all your quarto volumes, you explain these with an openness, and ingeniousness which must ensure you applause, and with an eagerness which demonstrates, that those little and peculiar interests which others feel only as secondary objects, and think it becoming as gentlemen to be silent about, are really the most important concerns in life, and may be fairly avowed by a professor and a Physician, as the first, if not the sole objects of his care.

The following passage, for example, is extremely instructing to all ranks of the profession; and no one could have delivered the doctrine with so much effect as the Professor of the practice of physic in the University of Edinburgh. If Physicians in this country were to be PAID as they are in other countries, at the rate of a SHILLING a visit, or perhaps much less; or even as the celebrated Boerhaave, in the height of his fame, was usually PAID, by the richest of his countrymen, AT THE RATE of a Dutch florin or guilder (about two and twenty pence) each visit, there can be no doubt that they would be much more generally employed than they are; very probably too, MUCH MORE MONEY WOULD ON THE WHOLE be received by our FACULTY, than is received by us at present!” “The money that we receive by our practice, which, with respect to all of us taken collectively, bears no

proportion to the riches every day acquired by MANUFACTURERS and MERCHANTS, and with respect to a great majority of us, especially of our younger brethren, must be NEXT TO NOTHING !”

Thus you scruple not, in return for the analogies borrowed from other professions, to display the mysteries of your own trade in the most homely undisguised language. I fear, Sir, by being so clear and plain in your estimate, of WHAT REPUTATION IS WORTH, you have reduced the standard very low indeed.

Nothing is unacceptable to you, however low or despicable, which helps to explain your doctrines OF DAILY BREAD : and you are quite as open in declaring your hostility against any measure, by which good repute might become common, and the care of health, or the GAINS OF PRACTICE, be diffused among the YOUNGER part of your PROFESSION. This, Sir, is the whole occasion of your enmity, the pith of all your professional quarrels, and is summed up, in the following plain terms, accompanied with such indecent reproaches as never were blurted out in the face of any professional body.

“ NONE of our brethren can be, I trust, either so young or so foolish as to suppose it possible, that they themselves individually, or that physicians collectively, should be both GENERALLY EMPLOYED, AND WELL PAID, AND HIGHLY ESTEEMED AND RESPECTED.” \*

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\* Censorian Letter, page 27.

This Professor's sentiments are always equally delicate, and his illustrations learned and polite. He addresses the following poc-



These are the unlucky inferences you are always drawing from your own habits to those of a learned and respectable profession: You have notoriously studied the ART of medicine more than the SCIENCE; and having taken an alarm past all comprehension, lest your younger brethren should usurp any share of that practice which you regard as a property peculiar to yourself and your PROFESSIONAL FRIENDS, you have attempted to terrify them by threats, to shame them by reproaches, from a step which I do think, with your father, is the only one which can redeem the profession from dishonour, and establish its practice in purity and simplicity.

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tical argument to the respectable and learned College, in the said Censorial Letter.

“ It is certainly a fine thing to be YOUNG; but I should not choose to be so very young as to mistake, which some of our brethren seems to have done, a NURSERY SONG for a serious truth, and a rational model for their imitation in the conduct of life.

“ There was a man of Thessaly,  
 And he was wondrous wise;  
 He jump'd into a quick-set hedge,  
 And scratch'd out both his eyes:  
 And when he *saw* his eyes were out,  
 With all his might and main  
 He jump'd into another hedge,  
 And scratch'd them in again.”

It is difficult to say whether the wit, or the argument, of such quotations, is most to be admired; but of this there is no doubt, that the poetry he quotes is of such a kind as to give peculiar grace, and a kind of sanction, to that which he writes about “ DOXIES and ROXES.”

The language you have the presumption to use towards the conclusion of this *ESSAY ON TRADE*, is such as no individual nor corporate body of the lowest description, tamed to every kind of insolence, could endure. “No man ever yet took the trouble to go *DOWN THE CHIMNEY, OR UP THE SINK !* and *THROUGH THE PRIVY !* to get into a house, unless he had some strong reasons for not going in at the door, when this was in his power. It is generally understood, that the most frequent and powerful reason for taking those *INDIRECT WAYS* of going into a house are, that the person taking them does not wish to be seen going in, and that he is going in for *NO GOOD PURPOSE.*”

This is indeed of the very stuff of which all your writings *SAVOUR* strongly, but it is by far the most *FLORID* of all your compositions, which all partake of the genus *dicendi PINGUE et FLORIDUM*. Your *FLOWERS OF RHETORIC* have now some chance of being known to the world, your character to men of learning ! \* “Your life and writings exhibit (to

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\* This poor unhappy man, who “hath in truth no more conceit than a mallet,” is yet full of attempts at wit, but with this offensive peculiarity, that he never conceives his reasoning or illustrations to be sufficiently brilliant, unless he has descended to the very bottom of obscenity and beastliness. The following is an impartial specimen of his *PURE CONDENSED AND PUNGENT WIT*, and his pure and delicate irony.

“As the foul fiend has never yet been *FOUND LYING DEAD IN A DITCH !* it becomes a curious and interesting enquiry, what has become

use the terms of Samuel Johnson) a kind of illustrious depravity and majestic madness, in which the ridiculous is mixed with the astonishing." One can hardly imagine a set of rational men, convened in a college for respectable and serious purposes, and annoyed by a deluge of such filthy recrementitious stuff, without conceiving the notion of an immense Yahoo perched above them, and revenging the slight degree of likeness he recognises in those below, by shedding ordure on their heads.

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become of the demon of party since he left our kindred College? To me it seems but too probable, that he has found admission into ours, *perhaps* in consequence of some of our brethren not being *sufficiently aware* of his PECULIAR MODE OF ENTRANCE." (what steps they should take to prevent his entrance will presently appear.) "They certainly know that SPIRITS of different kinds enter into us by different avenues: *The little god of love* ALWAYS enters at the eyes, sometimes though these are fortified with the STRONGEST SPECTACLES !!! (the first time we have ever been informed that the STRENGTH of spectacles prevents seeing.) The spirit of *harmony*! and what is *curious*, the spirit of war, equally enter always at the ears, the former with the help of the *violin and harp*, the latter introduced by the *trumpet, fife, and drum*! The *joyial* god of drinking! and the *worshipful* god of eating! always enter at the mouth! The powerful *sterling spirit* enters at the points of the fingers, as appears by the close and permanent contraction which he produces in the *flexor muscles of them*! The Greek and Latin muses enter only at the *back front*, but so *effectually*, that boys whose skulls are impenetrable, if diligent application be made to the PROPER PLACE, in five or six years begin to make nonsense verse !! (For the real value of a thing is as much money as 'twill bring.) The *transition* from which to what they

If the measures in which the Royal College of Physicians was engaged were indirect, indecent, dishonourable, and unsuccessful, why not leave the ill success of such measures, to draw down on their heads the shame and dishonour, the ruin too which dishonest projects must bring upon their contrivers? —Why labour to reform;—why plunge into the deep waters to save such worthless creatures? Much happier, Sir, had you been, if you had passed your life in tranquillity, and used your talents for purposes of beneficence and charity. But it is shrewdly to be suspected, that it was less the shame and dishonour, than the assured success of these younger physicians, that you feared; and I believe I shall be able (passing over the rest of your atrocious language) so to explain this practical question, as to account for your malignity.

Your volumes of malignity are actionable in every page; yet God forbid, that the liberty of the press

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they call sense, is so easy, that no boy was ever known to boggle at it! there being no *pons asinorum* in the way!"

"If my brethren will take the trouble to enquire of any *respectable magician* of their acquaintance! they will soon be assured that the foul fiend, the DEMON OF PARTY, always entered at the *PODEX*! it being *impossible* that he should gain admittance by any less ignoble avenue!"

No one surely could so properly point out the NATURAL EXPEDIENT, as the learned, admirable, and witty, very witty, Professor; he has proved himself by far the fittest person for the office he has undertaken, of STOPPING THE ENTRANCE of this foul demon, with whose haunts he is so very familiar. He knows best "how to apply,——vigorously, to the PLACE APPOINTED BY NATURE, when the SAID PLACE IS EXPOSED." It is a cleanly office, which well befits the PROFESSOR OF CALUMNY.

should be restrained, or the extent of these precious dissertations on trade, by the immaculate Professor Gregory, be any way abridged, even by law-suits, and fines: "Write, Sir, by all means write!"—"Pour on, we can endure it all."

But, stop, there is one point on which we disagree, one more worthy, perhaps, of being investigated, than any that your boasted genius for quarrelling with your profession has yet brought before the public. We differ on the application of this opprobrious term MEDICAL POLEMICS, which you have chosen to appropriate to the most useful discussions in which medical philosophers have ever been engaged: we disagree concerning the subjects on which it is right, fit, or becoming a Physician, to bestow his talents, or give up that time which should be devoted to study, and to the service of his fellow-creatures. You had observed, that, in Medical Polemics, the bitterness of disputation was apt to be forgotten, while the fame of the PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENT or DISCOVERY survived; and you vainly imagined that the same indulgence would be extended to QUARRELS ABOUT TRADE! to ADVERTISEMENTS, AND BILLS!!! To volumes of DEFAMATION! to INDUSTRIOUS COLLECTIONS of SCURRILOUS and SCURVY JESTS!!! It is indeed most singular to find Dr Gregory, the tyrant of his profession, the traducer of his rivals, the busy perturber of colleges, declaiming against medical warfare!"

Well, Sir, let us see what are these quarrels which you have produced as demonstrations of the weak bad passions of medical men!—First, the



doctrine of CULLEN, the celebrated and admired Doctrine of Spasm! the true and useful theory of irregularities in the balance of the circulation, oppressing sometimes the lungs, sometimes the brain, sometimes the general circulation of the blood?—That doctrine which you have had the confidence to decry, under the contemptuous name of a ‘TUB, to AMUSE THE WHALE,’—Next the rival doctrine of the celebrated BROWN, substituting to this of Spasm, a more universal and more seemingly philosophical theory of diseases:—Next, the schisms of the schools of Italy and France, of Botallus and Van Helmont, in respect to Bleeding in Acute Diseases: the disputes of Sydenham, Morton, and Dimsdale, about the propriety of bleeding in secondary small-pox, and the cooling regimen;—the more modern dispute concerning the use of calomel, and the lancet, in Yellow-Fever; and on the infectious and epidemic nature of that disease.

Next, the disputes of Hewson concerning the structure of the spleen, and the particles of the blood; of MONRO, concerning the structure of the nerves; of MONRO, and HUNTER, and AKENSIDE on the discovery of the Absorbent Vessels; and last of all, the petty differences in the practices of JOHN and BENJAMIN BELL, in the cure of the Hydrocele.

These you have the weakness to revile as guilty debates, and you have the partiality to believe, that such unavoidable differences on philosophical subjects will vindicate your scurvy QUARRELS ABOUT TRADE!—miserable! and you imagine that invectives against these celebrated men, industrious in philosophy, and occupied in all seemly and useful studies, will procure you a reputation for learning;

and that the following wretched conclusion of your invectives, will ensure you a reputation for wit ! “ Of the many bones of contention which have kept them (viz. the surgeons) EMBROILED on a GRIDIRON !!! I know not one, unless perhaps the dispute about the Hydrocele ! ” \*

Really, Sir, your instinctive cunning is wonderful ; you think to vindicate your five volumes of scurrility, by the temper in which disputes truly philosophical have been conducted ; you take occasion to say, that “ the reason of our frequent wars is abundantly evident ; we are of necessity RIVALS for FAME and FORTUNE, of which, of necessity also, a very unequal distribution takes place among us : Few, if any of us, succeeding according to our merits.” \* However natural it may be, Sir, to make this just inference from your own passions, it is not allowable to impute those sordid desires to men elevated above them, as much by their great characters, as by their station. What rivalry, in respect to fame, can be traced in the disputes of physicians, residing in the distant and unconnected cities of Paris and Vienna, of Edinburgh and London ? of physicians in the far distant cities of Africa, and of Italy ?—Were Monro, Hewson, and Hunter, and Akenside, rivals in practice ? Were not the infatuated disciples of Cullen and of Brown, whose debates in the medical society you have though fit to celebrate, more zealous than their masters ?

Your own feelings carry you into very strange errors : your medical works are five volumes of pure

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\* Censorian Letter, p. 244.

undefected malice; and you think to vindicate such unprincipled warfare against the reputation of your rivals, by inveighing against Anatomists, Philosophers and Improvers of our most useful science: against physicians disputing about the use of mercury! and the abuse of bleeding! The nature of fever! The functions of the Nerves and Absorbent Vessels, and the structure of the most complex and curious organs of the animal body. No, Sir, such men were not “rivals for FORTUNE, not even for FAME;”—they contended for truth, till eagerness for superiority, and personal recrimination, mixed in the debate; and thus too often have the noblest exertions of human talent been disgraced with petulant and trivial passions.

But these were contentions profitable to mankind: This bitterness ripened into fruit: By these disputes, we count the steps of philosophical discovery, and the slow progress of science; and the names of such men will be remembered with honour, when your's is for ever disgraced by foul calumnious writings! Many who, at an early period of your career, augured better things, look with astonishment at the ponderous pile of quarto volumes full of malicious trumpery, on which you sit grinning with ideot-like delight at your own folly.\*

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\* I flatter myself that I have done humanity some service, in converting this magnificent collection of calumny into a sort of funeral pile:

“Quale fuit Cassi, rapido ferventius amni,  
Ingenium; Capsis quem fama est esse librisque  
Ambustum propriis.”

Then let the world take note,—that in our profession all philosophical discussions are, by high and great authority, henceforth abrogated and utterly annulled: Let no man henceforward dispute about Nerves, or Arteries, or Debility, or Spasm; about the Reaction of the Heart or Arterial System, about Excitement or Collapse; nor about any part of the structure of the animal body! quarrels, contemptible and irrelevant, while the study of PRACTICE is alone worthy of our care! Let all schisms and heresies in medical science cease, and all discoveries, except how to improve the ART of medicine! Let all who would excel, first resort to that NORTHERN UNIVERSITY, ABERDEEN! where genuine enthusiasm comes by inspiration: where the genius of every profession, from the “Baker and Brewer to the Attorney inclusively,” throws a mutual light on the politics of every other; and then reside some time in this city of Edinburgh, where the PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE is busily employed instructing by precept and example in EVERY USEFUL ART.

You perceive, Sir, that I am not niggardly of praise where praise is due: That I acknowledge one kind of merit in you, viz. The choice of a subject hitherto sadly neglected, the PRACTICAL DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE: and willingly allowed you the praise of having completed the system of education in this school. The Monros and Cullens wrote on the science! Your Father on the SENTIMENTS and CONDUCT of the profession! yourself on TRADE and PRACTICE! Every thing seems natural in this progress: these periods correspond not unaptly with

the stages of man's life; and the doctrines of the school typify and present to the considerate beholder, the several ages of youth, manhood, and declining years. verging now "to second childishness and mere oblivion."

Are those the debates that you, Sir, whose dereliction of the highest duties is notorious, dare to reprobate, are these the men whom you have the confidence to traduce? We are to blame in suffering you to disturb our profession, in wasting in debate with you about your practice, that time which should be sacred to professional and philosophical studies.

Changed, indeed, the times, since those great men flourished: What would the Gregorys and the Cullens of the last century, what would the Hunters, and Hewsons, and Akensides say, of those base and low disputes, which your politics and conduct, even more than your flagitious writings, have brought into the profession?

" ————— Well,  
Thus we play the fool with the time,  
While the spirits of the wise sit i' the clouds  
And mock us." —————



## LETTER XII.

Trading alliances betwixt Apothecaries and Physicians deprecated; the principles of such alliances investigated; their indelicacy and danger explained.—The Young Physicians show a disposition to enter into Practice; they begin to take measures for accomplishing this.—The generous and liberal PROFESSOR GREGORY is alarmed at nothing, really, but the DISHONOUR the Royal College might suffer by such measures.

The merits of a Young Physician, of a man in the middle period of life, mature in study, of respectable manners, of literary habits, and a reflecting turn of mind, contrasted with that of an Apothecary's eldest apprentice or youngest son, uneducated, unable to reply to the routine of questions at Surgeons-Hall, incapable even of translating a receipt in the Pharmacopœia, but taught to course the streets, and call it Practice.

The merits of an independent and liberal Physician, unembarrassed by base connections, uncontrouled in his opinions, and responsible to God and his conscience only for his practice, compared with those of a Trading Physician, consulted chiefly at the desire of Apothecary-Surgeons, subservient to their interests, a partaker in their gains, and “repaying, (perhaps a hundred times in a year,) the obligations he owes them, IN A WAY WHICH ALL CONCERNED for the HONOUR OF MEDICINE must reflect on with INDIGNATION.”

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WELL, Sir, about trade :—You have, under the bold pretext of delicacy and honour, under the title of a functionary of the Royal College, laid open the most private debates of that society, and called upon the uninformed, the prejudiced public, to judge, not only on the most delicate questions relat-

ting to the conduct of our profession, but on the motives, dispositions, passions, and interests of its individual members. The meanest club of artizans may well pretend to have a better constitution, and a more dignified character, than you have allowed to the College of Physicians: But your conception of the design of such an institution, sufficiently explains your conduct: You have no other notion of a corporate body, but that it is calculated to maintain some selfish privileges, not for the public good. Of a College of Surgeons or Physicians, you have never been able to attain to any higher notion than this, that they are “THIRTY OR FORTY MEN ASSEMBLED to STRIVE AND SCRAMBLE FOR THEIR DAILY BREAD.”\*

This DAILY BREAD is, according to you, the only imaginable cause of quarrel worthy of a physician; it is certainly the only kind of quarrel you have ever condescended to think of; and your apprehensions are stated in these plain and intelligible words: “The purpose of the proposed repeal is, (not crookedly nor cunningly, then, nor knavishly nor secretly,) but AVOWEDLY to procure for the younger members of this College (and eventually for all the members) GENERAL EMPLOYMENT, in all the common and slight disorders which are in general

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\* “I do not know so well what might happen in a congregation of forty such men, especially if they had the misfortune to be united in one corporation of Physicians or Surgeons, AND, OF COURSE, were made rivals for fame and fortune, perhaps obliged to STRIVE AND SCRAMBLE FOR DAILY BREAD.” *Second Memorial*, p. 20.

considered as of no difficulty or danger, and which are, by the established custom of both England and Scotland, entrusted, at least IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, to medical practitioners who are NOT CALLED PHYSICIANS, but either APOTHECARIES or SURGEONS, or both, as in Edinburgh."\*

I believe, Sir, I shall find strong reasons, even in your own descriptions of such men, for NOT exactly CALLING them PHYSICIANS; and no one can be at a loss to conceive what motives Dr Gregory may have for wishing that all diseases which are AT THE FIRST considered as of no difficulty or danger, should be for ever entrusted to men who ARE NOT CALLED PHYSICIANS.

Liberal as this accidental acknowledgement is, that it was the AVOWED intention of many members of your college, to charge themselves with the care of those diseases not at first reckoned dangerous, and to procure for themselves "GENERAL EMPLOYMENT," yet so much were you agitated by doubt, fear, and rage, that you accused the whole college of intrigue! of chicane and cunning! of secret crooked ways! of going up the COMMON SEWER, and down the CHIMNEY.

What should induce these gentlemen to conceal their intentions from you? How could they conceal them? Believe me, Sir, these gentlemen stood in no awe either of your termagant virtue, or of your inveterate rancour. If the President Dr Hope, and others of the younger Physicians, declined convers-

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\* Censorian Letter, p. 25.

ing with you in private, it must only have been lest you should “remember to forget” the expressions they used. Nobody fears you: You are not so ridiculously formidable as your own coarse words represent you: You have not yet been “guilty of many acts of horse-stealing, house-breaking, or highway robbery:” You have not (that we know of) been sentenced to transportation for fourteen years, nor HANGED for returning before your time\*, though you have been suspended from your functions in the College, “You are not a RHINOCEROS! nor a good SPECULATION.”†

No, Sir, what these gentlemen meant, they meant honestly, and avowed openly. The fact stands thus: In the year 1754, the Royal College, of Physicians, apprehending dishonour to the profession by the intrusion of improper persons into the society, enacted a law, having this prefatory clause, “That considering an innovation and abuse had lately been

\* “If any one of them, either singly, or in the name, and with the sanction and vote of thanks of his brethren, chooses to publish in another amphlet, or in the newspapers, that I have been guilty of many acts of horse-stealing, house-breaking, and highway robbery; that I was sentenced to transportation for fourteen years, and am in danger of being hanged for returning before my time was expired.”

*Preface, p. xxvi.*

† “It is evident that I must be one of the most FORMIDABLE MONSTERS that ever appeared in the world! That I should be entitled to take precedence of the Irish giant, is abundantly plain; but I think, without much vanity, I might be a better SPECULATION FOR A SHOWMAN! than any RHINOCEROS! or royal tyger, that ever yet was exhibited.”

*Gregory's Preface, p. ix.*

introduced into the manner of practising physic within this city and its liberties, whereby some physicians, licensed and authorised by the said Royal College to practise physic, have also acted as apothecaries, by KEEPING OR SETTING UP APOTHECARIES SHOPS, and thereby conjoining the professions of medicine and pharmacy in one and the same person,—the said College hereby enact, That no member of the said College, nor any physician by them licensed and authorised to practise physic within the said city and liberties, shall take upon himself to use the employment of an APOTHECARY, or to have an APOTHECARY'S SHOP, by himself, or partners, or servants." "And all and every physician, applying to the said College for a licence, shall previously enact and oblige himself, not to SET UP AN APOTHECARY'S SHOP!" &c. "and shall become bound and enacted, not to practise pharmacy thereafter IN MANNER FORESAID," viz. by SETTING up an open APOTHECARY'S SHOP. \*

I know not, Sir, what you, a metaphysician, make of this; but in plain sense, SETTING UP AN APOTHECARY'S SHOP, is just "SETTING UP AN APOTHECARY'S SHOP!" and nothing but taking up or setting up an apothecary's shop, by a licentiate of the College, can, according to my poor understanding, be a violation of this law. It is a law as applicable to the College of Surgeons as to the College of Physicians. I no more keep an apothecary's shop, than the President, or even the Censor of the College of Physicians.

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\* Vide Laws of the College of Physicians.



But, Sir, the power which made the law can change the law, and these gentlemen owe it to themselves, and to their profession, and to their fellow-citizens, to remove whatever paltry impediments hinders them performing those very important duties for which, by a learned education and a careful study of their profession, they are so well prepared; from assuming that perfect independence of apothecaries OR SURGEON APOTHECARIES! without which the profession of a physician can neither be reputable nor useful; nor the practice of medicine be rendered simple and effectual.

From you, and your contemptible notions of trade, I never would desire to appeal to a juster authority than that of your respected father. "In regard to pharmacy, (he says) it were much to be wished that those who make it their business should have no connection with the practice of physic; or that PHYSICIANS should DISPENSE THEIR OWN MEDICINES: and, either not charge the expence of them to their patients at all, or charge it at the prime cost."

"It is only in one or other of those ways, that we can ever hope to see that SIMPLICITY of PRESCRIPTION take place in the practice of medicine, which all who understand its real interests ardently wish for; and it is only from such an arrangement, that we can expect to see PHYSICIANS placed in that HONOURABLE INDEPENDENCE, which subjects them TO NO ATTENTIONS but such as tend to the advancement of their art."\*

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\* The elder Gregory's Lectures on the Duties and Qualifications of a Physician.

“ But it is a known fact, that in many parts of Europe, physicians, who have the best parts and best education, must frequently depend for their success upon apothecaries, who have no pretensions to either the one or the other ; and that the obligation to apothecaries, is often repaid by what every one concerned for the honour of medicine must reflect on with indignation.”\*

Here have I delivered the whole text. Your father, Sir, without the slightest allusion to professional profit, unless it be to express his abhorrence of trade, decides this question on the true principle, the public good, and the improvement of science ; and there are three points distinctly and neatly explained : *1st*, What should be done in justice to the public, and our much honoured profession :—*2d*, The effects of this arrangement, in reducing the prescriptions of physicians to a desirable simplicity, and in delivering men of the first rank in our profession from a disgraceful subjugation to the most ignorant and selfish :—*3d*, The dreadful consequences of the cunning unprincipled alliances of physicians with surgeons, for purposes so base, that all concerned for the honour of our profession must reflect on them with indignation ; Within the point blank of which reproof you stand, and with other sins on your head than any your father imagined : the utmost he apprehended was, that secret trade in gratuitous fees, and complaisant pres-

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\* Gregory on the Duties and Qualifications of a Physician, p. 43, 44.

cription, that private feeling of mutual interests, which though every man may see, no man dare challenge: little thought this virtuous old man, that his son was to signalize his entrance into life with useful calumnies, and gainful intrigues! revolutions in hospitals, and quarrels in colleges! open bare-faced associations with clubs of busy apothecaries, with a copartnery of surgeons, and with a fellow physician: seeking by every art to enlarge that patronage which his father regarded as odious and disgraceful.

Your reasons must be very singular for wishing that physicians of the best parts, and best education, should continue under this dishonourable imputation, subject to apothecaries, or apothecary-surgeons, to be by them called or rejected at pleasure, according to their humour, their affection, or their affinity! For wishing that to such men a physician of the best education and parts should be a conveniency, a lock and key for their secrets, a cloak to cover their misdeeds, or be deposed for want of complying dispositions, and dismissed from their practice.

I will tell you, Sir, from an authority you will be less inclined to dispute than any I have yet quoted,—your own, what a surgeon-apothecary is in this city, and what is peculiar and commendable in our manner of conducting the profession: A surgeon is himself a physician, and an independent one; unless when he is too plainly leagued with physicians, for purposes of trade. A surgeon is the ordinary attendant on families in all the common casualties and diseases. “The Surgeon-Apothecaries, in fact, (you tell us) do not keep open shops

in their own houses, for the purpose of dispensing medicines to their own patients.”\* “Several of the best employed Surgeon-Apothecaries are paid by many of their patients, and all of them would, I believe, wish to be paid by all their patients, without ever giving in a bill for the medicines furnished, and with very little or no regard to the quantity of those medicines †.” It is true, Sir, a surgeon is indeed rewarded according to the fortune, or often, according to the too grateful feelings of his patients, according to his rank, his station, his reputation, or his real service, and kindly attentions. What does this amount to, but to the character of an INDEPENDENT PHYSICIAN? a physician called by the free judgment of his patient, embarrassed with no useless consultations, unincumbered by advice, beholden to no friendly apothecary for the confiding and friendly terms on which he is received, answerable to God and his conscience only for the purity of his practice.

I have thus explained that independence of character, and simplicity of practice, which your father approved; nor are the surgeons of this city even apothecaries, (for this too we have your own authority in your own old slang): “None of their patients can be so STUPID as to suppose that those men whom they see running about from morning to night in the streets, and practising as physicians, should with their OWN HANDS make up and prepare the medicines which they send to their patients’ houses ‡.” They are in no way

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\* Censorian Letter, p. 56.    † Ibid, p. 57.

‡ Censorian Letter, p. 4.



apothecaries, but keep in correct order a few unostentatious, useful medicines, commissioned from an apothecary's shop, with young men ready to give them out, a dose of calomel, a laudanum draught, an emetic, a blister or a pill, or rhubarb or bark, with discretion and care.

If physicians can be saved from the degrading dependence on Apothecary-Surgeons, by an arrangement similar to this, by having a few choice medicines, and God knows it is but few that are useful, it were a most blessed improvement, honourable to our profession, and useful to humanity. Then would a physician go where he were called, prescribe just what he thought useful, hold a consultation when it were required, a real consultation, and not a mockery, a consultation of men of real science, when danger, not ceremony nor intrigue, required it: Then a physician becoming independent of apothecaries, apothecaries would become subservient to physicians; and when, in place of another draught, a dose of calomel, or a pill of opium, some more complicated or ostentatious medicine were to be prescribed, the Public Apothecary, attending solely to his peculiar duties, would compound such prescriptions with economy and care.

This, I apprehend, is the "simplicity of prescription," and "independence of the physician," which your father looked forward to, but which your course of trade and politics has removed farther than ever from the hopes of those who "understand the real interests, or value the honour of our profession."—— That a physician should be notoriously leagued with



a fraternity of surgeons ! or a sensible and honourable man of our profession, oppressed with an incubus of a physician, is a contrivance at once the most dangerous and ridiculous that can be imagined.

But dependence and servitude, galling as it must be at the best, to a man of spirit and education, may be rendered more grievous by the consciousness of being subservient to base and ignorant men, or, as your father expresses it, “when physick, as in many places, is practised by low illiterate men, by apothecaries who have no pretension either to parts or education.” (p. 44.)

Why should I describe the low, covetous, and ignorant creatures, to whose caprices, to whose base interests, the talents of the best educated physician may be made subservient. The dreadful consequences of such an abuse are well depicted by the elder Gregory ; the obnoxious character more unreservedly and more adventurously described by his son. “Of the many individuals who in the course of this century may aspire to become fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, some will be half mad ! and others more than half stupid ! some will be grossly ignorant of their profession, of which perhaps they may have never learnt any more than just to pass at their examination ! (not so much, Sir, some of them !!!) and even this little they may have learnt by means of a short catechism which they never understood, but only got by rote ! SOME SMART LADS may have had a good deal of knowledge just when they CAME OUT of their APPRENTICESHIPS ! nine-tenths of which (i. e. of which good deal) they may

have forgotten in the course of FIVE, TEN, OR TWENTY YEARS PASSED WITHOUT STUDY ! some may have excellent FINGERS and THUMBS, but without BRAIN enough to know how and when to use them ! Others may have brain enough, and of a very good kind, who may be lamentably deficient in point of FINGERS and THUMBS !—some may be savages in their dispositions, and brutes in their manners ; some may be very fine gentlemen, minutely acquainted with all the fashionable,” &c. (Here comes Jenny again upon the stage.) \*

Independent of the polite and elegant language of this dissertation upon Apothecary-Surgeons, there is a shrewdness of observation, and a truth of drawing which is admirable : This is a character with which, I have no doubt, you are tolerably familiar, sketched to the life. It is impossible not to understand now what you mean by those “ to whom, though NOT EXACTLY PHYSICIANS ! all common and slight disorders, which are in general considered as of no difficulty or danger, are at least in the FIRST INSTANCE intrusted ;” to whose care such diseases must come in the LAST RESORT, is pretty obvious !

To the degrading picture you have exhibited, it would be difficult to add any trait of cunning, to make incapacity more dangerous, more odious. I would fain offer an apology, at least for those things about which you express such unqualified contempt, viz. these said deficiencies in “ THUMBS ! and BRAINS !”—These young men, whom you upbraid as with wilful incapacity, and

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\* Second scurrilous Quarto, p. 8.

want of zeal, are born in ignorance! the sons and relatives of Surgeons, they have their little knowledge by inheritance, and their trade by their birth-right: Educated in the duties of the shop, and the labours of the mortar, they are, at the end of a five years apprenticeship, at two and twenty years of age, taught to run about the streets, and call it practice! Can those feel emulation who never saw study? Can those have a respect for reputation, who have no dependence on any such help for thriving in practice? They inherit their father's reputation, and their father's patients; their father's alliances, their father's propensities; and, like yourself, they most willingly barter all pretensions to learning or reputation, for DAILY BREAD.

It requires indeed a strong preliminary education, to provide for such an uninterrupted course of running, and practising: it would be difficult to accumulate, before twenty years of age, a fund of knowledge sufficient to last for life, difficult to keep pace with the improvement of science. If there be a creature so abandoned, as to thrust his son, his brother, or other heir of his practice, thus unprovided, upon the world at a premature age, what should we say of his honesty? for it is plainly impossible for any such young man, were his genius of the most exalted kind, to repair the defects of such an improvident course of life: He is consecrated according to the rule of the priests of Guadma, in the kingdom of Ava: "Thou shalt search for healing qualities in simples, sweet and sour, milk and honey, sugar and syrups; but the first and principal duty in our holy

function, is PROCURING MAINTENANCE by PERAMBULATION ! by LABORIOUS INCESSANT MOTION of the MUSCLES OF THE LEGS ! you must seek maintenance by CONTINUAL MOTION.”\*

When was it ever known that any of those you thus pleasantly describe, who “ have thus learnt such questions as may serve them to pass an examination, conned and repeated without understanding, or, if understood, quite irrelevant to practice and soon forgotten ? ” when has any such person stopt on the threshold of that temple which he was about to profane, and retired to study, to read to think ; to acquire in literature the accomplishments of a gentleman ; and to lay in that indispensable knowledge of the structure of the human body, physiology, chemistry, and all the departments of medical science, which may serve as a basis for experience ? What racer and runner of this description, does more than read a Number of some Medical Journal, that he may talk about projects of which he dare not judge, or learn to vary slightly his routine of unthinking practice ? I have seen such a person as you describe, but never could distinguish any spirit, any emulation, any pride, becoming his profession ;

“ Nor ever noted in him any study,  
Any retirement, any sequestration  
From open haunts and popularity.”

This being, whom you have so curiously portraying, I may presume, without any violation of good manners, is of the description of persons with whom you are familiar. And, Sir, are these the men fit to

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\* Sym's Account of the Embassy to the kingdom of Ava.



be the ORDINARY PHYSICIANS in this city, in diseases NOT AT FIRST thought dangerous? Are these the men under whose government this great and respectable profession should be conducted; to whom “physicians of the best parts, and best education, should be subservient?”

Deficient in goodness, suavity, or the power of persuasion, you have but two methods of enforcing your arguments, viz. by threats or by reproaches: You presumptuously tell the Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians, that they have not even capacity to play the part of apothecaries: You tell them, that practice would bring them nothing but dishonour! That you, associated as you are with persons of this description, should infer the danger and impolicy of changing any way the mode of practice in this city, from the INCAPACITY OF PHYSICIANS, is really very, very daring, after having given such an alarming description of those apothecary-surgeons, who, you tell us, are the “ordinary physicians in this city! Yet you have confidently told the public, that “a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, is probably not much better qualified to perform the office of an apothecary, than that of a confectioner or a pastrycook.”\*

The images that most naturally present themselves to your imagination, are those of a Baker, or Butcher, Cook, Postillion, Tanner, or a Carpenter: The Pyebaker and the Pastrycook were the only trading personages hitherto unhonoured by the great Professor

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\* Censorian Letter p. 33.



of Physic. You have written in too much haste, to express fully the notion that was in your head; you have said, “the physicians are no more able than pastrycooks to perform the function of apothecaries;” when you, in truth, meant to say, “the Fellows of our College are not so like Pastry-Cooks as those I daily see practising the trade of Apothecaries and ordinary physicians” in this city. .

This would have been intelligible; but there is a more extraordinary argument, (what you call metaphysical, I presume, maintained in this dissertation of yours upon Apothecaries, who, though they seem your dear and cherished friends, you do not scruple to degrade, knowing that any taint of reputation, if you can but indicate and retain their practice, will do them no manner of injury. You maintain, “that a man having chiefly the talents of a sordid Apothecary is better able to play the Physician than a learned Physician to perform the office of an honest Apothecary!”—Your words are these: “If any of our patients, or those whom we wish to have for patients, have but two grains of common sense, they will infallibly discover, that a man who has been bred BOTH AN APOTHECARY and a PHYSICIAN, as is and has long been the case with the surgeon-apothecaries of Edinburgh, in consequence of the cheapness of education, and the flourishing state of the medical school in this university, must be infinitely better qualified to PRACTISE PHYSIC in addition to PHARMACY, than a man can be to practice PHARMACY in addition to PHYSIC, who has had only the education of a Physician, but not that of an Apothecary; and

who probably is not much better qualified to perform the office of an apothecary than that of a confectioner or pastry-cook." \*

Skilled beyond all competitors in the principles of trade, and true to your best friends, all your illustrations are drawn from the lowest professions, and all your arguments propitious to ignorance! No, Sir, though all the world must admit that your favourite apothecaries "ACT as ordinary physicians," that they are "BRED as physicians," is a proposition of a very debateable nature.

You are, for a metaphysician, very inaccurate in your terms: You use indiscriminately BRED and TAUGHT, or EDUCATED! The gentlemen you speak of are BRED surgeons, that is, they are surgeons and apothecaries by their parentage! they are the sons, &c. of surgeons, "and hereditary sloth instructs them:" They know not when they begin to be apothecaries, but by the ceremony of signing an Indenture to their Father: They know not when they cease to be apprentices, but by finding that they begin to run about the streets, which is called practice: They receive from the Professors of the University, gratis, those tickets which the industrious and eager student, the stranger, procures at "an expence that pinches parents blue." This circumstance, dishonourable to no party, is yet one no way calculated to excite enthusiasm. Pills they compound, and potions also, and carry them: but if they feel, pulses it must be through the brass-knockers or bell-wires, galvanically! The issue of

the disease they learn by ceasing from their travel, or by observing, in place of the physician's equipage in attendance, that of his partner Mr Trotter." \* No course of education but this can explain those accomplishments which you describe so openly and ingenuously: It is thus "that they learn so little of their profession! no more than just to enable them to pass at their examination; and even this little they may have learnt by means of a short

### PROFESSOR GREGORY'S PARTNERSHIPS.

\* "In plain English, I intend to enter into partnership with an eminent Undertaker," &c. Whenever I enter into Mr TROTTER'S SHOP, he receives me with the most gracious smiles, and bows, as much as to say, "Sir, you are my very good customer, and my very good friend, and I shall be happy," &c.

Vid. the thing called by Dr Gregory a *Censorian Letter*, p. 136.

I will tell you, Sir, how a man of real principle would have represented the purity of his intention, and his aversion from any scandalous alliances in trade. He would have said it thus: "In plain English, I intend to enter into partnership with Mr Benjamin Bell; for when I enter HIS SHOP, he and all his SIX PARTNERS, receive me with the most gracious smiles, and bow in succession and together, laterally, diagonally, and transversely, saying always, Sir, you are OUR VERY GOOD CUSTOMER! and we shall be happy to SERVE YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS." This, though not so magnificent an illustration as that of the Upholsterers, might be fully as near the truth. Has it not sometimes happened? might it not very possibly happen, when a whole Copartnery of Surgeons comes into your shop, You and your Partner, individually and respectively, stand smiling, graciously bowing, always saying, "Gentlemen, you are our VERY GOOD CUSTOMERS, and we shall be happy to serve YOU OR YOUR FRIENDS!"

catechism, which they never understood, but only got by rote."

Studying for a physician, whatever your notions or practices may have been, is widely different from this. It is as far from thumping mortars, as from twisting syllogisms. The young man who aspires to be a physician, studies, reads, and thinks; he may play away some hours in idleness, but none are wasted in unmeaning slavery. Long before the first five years of his studies, he is obliged to think; for he is occupied in dissection, and in the study of anatomy, chemistry, and philosophy; and in the latter years of his studies, he is employed in attending hospitals, and debating in societies: His studies may be irregular: He may be as little able as your friends to pass without the help of that treasure of Questions and Answers which you understand so well the value of: But when these boyish occupations are over, there comes an interval for reflection, a pause in his life, during which he consults with his parents and elder friends, pursues his studies with new and manly ardour, selects for himself some desirable situation, and while he is careful to support his reputation for professional skill, for steady manners, and gentlemanlike conduct, he does not, he dares not, discontinue his professional reading; rising slowly in practice, he has time to study successively each important case that is committed to his care.

When you would persuade the world, that it is easier to ascend from the lowest mechanical operations, to the highest exertions of intellect, than to descend from the highest cultivation of mind, to per-



form necessary mechanical operations, you argue like yourself; and from the metaphysical manner of your reasoning, it is natural to suspect the subtlety of your intentions. I affirm, Sir, that it is far easier to descend from the scientific conceptions of a physician, even to the details of pharmacy, than for an apothecary to fulfil the duties of a physician. Perhaps I should not have condescended to reason with one so wanton in every kind of transgression against truth, but should have stated one plain and public fact. The Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians sit in consultation, determining what medicines are efficacious, what useless, what fit to be retained, what to be rejected, in the Pharmacopœia, which is the standard and rule of practice: They reform the chemical processes by which our more powerful medicines are prepared, and ascertain the doses in which they may be administered; from year to year they republish this Code of Pharmacy, which regulates the practice of the whole country. They publish this little volume in Latin, from which I would infer that they are Chemists and Scholars; and one of their number translates it into English, with explanations and tables, detailing the qualities and doses, and explaining the chemical and technical names, for the use of your friends; from this I infer, that they are not uncharitable: The younger fellows, on whom this duty naturally devolves, though not permitted to practise, are thus of some use to the public.

Now, Sir, if it happens that I can name a set or gang of surgeons, that could not read one syllable of that Pharmacopœia in the original language, nor



give the rationale of one chemical process, no not to save their souls alive, I believe I shall be vindicated before my profession, and the public, in affirming, that "it were easier for any physician to become an APOTHECARY," than "for such an APOTHECARY as you describe to become any thing but WHAT HE IS."

Having exhausted in vain your tropes and figures, your parables of "Bakers and Brewers,"—"Butchers and Tanners,"—"Pies and Tarts," Milk-cows and DAILY BREAD,\* you talk in heroics to the fellows of the college about their honour and dignity; but when you cease to "write familiarly," and write in heroics, it is always for a purpose. "Part of our estate (you say) and upon the whole, by far, the most valuable part of it, is not the money that we receive in

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\* I have not perhaps mentioned this gentleman's delectable simile of the milch-cows; but it would be very unjust not to prove that he had not been negligent of some mild nutritious fluid, as a vehicle for his DAILY BREAD. "I shall not attempt (says the learned Professor) to argue against such a plan, which perhaps was never seriously intended; nor shall I enquire what chance of success it might have, if it were tried: I shall only observe, that supposing it to succeed, and the good PEOPLE of EDINBURGH to be perfect MILK-COWS, and to allow themselves to be disposed of by their medical friends, the supposed plan could but last a few years." &c. *Censorian Letter*, p. 67.

The peaceful and unresisting habits of the MILK-COWS can hardly be equalled, unless it be by the docility of the INFIRMARY ox about the contract! and I am so far from finding fault with this coarse simile, that I should not have blamed the professor very much, though, instead of MILK-COWS, who allow themselves to be DISPOSED OF! he had MILK-ASSES.

practice, which, with regard to all of us, taken collectively, bears no proportion to the riches every day acquired by MANUFACTURERS and MERCHANTS; with regard to a great majority of us, especially of our younger brethren, must be NEXT TO NOTHING: The best part of our estate is the RESPECT that we MEET WITH, and the honourable station that we are allowed to hold in society, as men of a learned and liberal profession; that is, as scholars and gentlemen. Like the clergy, the gentlemen of the long robe, and the professors in our university, we are UNDERSTOOD to hold a place in society far beyond the proportion of our wealth, or of our contingent professional gain; such a place as wealth alone can never purchase, and such a place as it would not be even for our pecuniary interests to forfeit."

"None of our brethren, I trust, are either so young or so foolish, as to suppose it possible that they themselves, individually, or that physicians collectively, should be both generally employed, and well paid, and highly respected."

Indeed, Sir, these are very desperate inferences drawn from your own way of life. This is the first time I have ever heard it affirmed, that the respectability of a physician was in an inverse proportion to his fees. I have ever imagined, that to be respected, employed, and paid liberally, were almost synonymous terms. No doubt, Sir, not the smallest doubt, that were a man to be generally employed only by being leagued with clubs of surgeons, and connected in partnership with other physicians, though

he might be "well paid," he could not expect to be highly respected, nor indeed would he much care: But while every member of the College of Physicians acts, like Monro, Rutherford, and others, the part of independent physicians, they cannot fail, the more they are employed, to be the more respected.

But, Sir, I will not affect to misunderstand, in the slightest degree, your clumsy argument: You mean to infer, "that were young physicians to visit their friends each in his own circle, as common attendants, and come in competition with apothecary-surgeons, in 'those ORDINARY DISEASES which are not dangerous, at least at the first,' they would lose the respect of the public;" in short, that, by entering into practice, or accepting fees, they would forfeit their dignity. This from you is the drollest doctrine! Why, Sir, the consequences are so obvious, that the moment the public understands what you mean, the long secrets of your enmities and jealousies is disclosed. "It is not a confident brow, nor the throng of words, that comes with much more than impudent sauciness from you, can thrust me from a level consideration:" I care not whose interest, my own, or yours, or any man's, is touched by this argument: I will maintain the principles and the independence of those in the higher rank of my profession, and that system which I know to be most advantageous for my fellow citizens; and be assured, Sir, I could no more be seduced into the defence of a disingenuous doctrine, by my enmity, or rather my contempt for you, than by my interests.

Is it fit, Sir, that for the interests you cultivate, or for such men as you describe, a whole college of physicians, men of study and education, thinking reasoning men, perfectly skilled in their profession, and in respect of knowledge far beyond that unmeaning routine of prescription which is hereditary and immutable with your best friends, should be condemned to hopeless inaction ! secluded from the world ! their talents and their acquirements lost to their fellow-citizens ! while the busy creatures you so facetiously describe, run about the streets, doing the office of ORDINARY PHYSICIANS in all diseases not AT THE FIRST esteemed dangerous ? You and your paltry politics, and my contempt of them, the just resentment of your brethren, and all the disputes of the present hour, must be forgotten ! but I will venture to prophesy, that in future times different sentiments will prevail, science will be thought a necessary part of art, and PHYSICIANS be employed in curing diseases.

The resistance of worthy men to rash reforms, is a sign of moderation, temperance, and goodness :— Your enmity towards every aspiring man of your own profession, wears a very different complexion. In every society in which you have had even a pretext for appearing, you have played the incendiary, and never without a purpose : Your conduct in your own college, as in ours, reminds us of those false insurers who count their gains before they raise the conflagration,

Persius orborum lautissimus, et merito jam  
Suspectus, tanquam ipse suas incenderit ædēs.



There are such incendiaries in modern times: "There are many (says Bacon) who will set fire to their neighbour's house, if it were but to roast their eggs."

It may, indeed, Sir, be very true, as you say, that "the best part of our estate is the respect we meet with in society, and the honourable station we are allowed to hold." But this dead reputation is vastly like the reputation that comes after death, very little profitable to the individual or to the world. It is, in my opinion, as much the duty of a physician to seek practice as knowledge: This is, indeed, the only public duty which a man of genius is apt to neglect. Those younger members of the Royal College of Physicians, it would appear, were desirous, at the hazard even of their honour, of exchanging a proportion of their dead reputation for living occupations, and what you call the "guineas!" You invited them to sustain the dignity of the College, by their silent solemn demeanour, yourself meanwhile, at the head of your troop of apothecary-surgeons, bustling through the public functions with a wild and staring indifference to all the proprieties and decencies of life, running out your own small proportion of dignity in exchange for current coin!

You would, I well believe, have liked to see those younger members crouching like Carryatides, sustaining in silence the dignity of the College; or rather, you would have had them seated in their hall, cold, still, and motionless, like the marble men and women in Synbad's enchanted city.



Your alarm and your violence are very natural : While all common and slight disorders, such as are in general considered as of no difficulty or danger, “ at least in the first instance,” are confided to men such as you describe, the patient looking to others for his safety in the more advanced and dangerous stages of his disease, the whole influence of the profession, the whole power of life and death, is deposited in the hands of the ignorant. Such men must proceed, according to routine, till that danger which might have been prevented can no longer be concealed ; and then, agitated by a twofold fear, for their own reputation, and their patients’ safety, they from ignorance throw a family into the utmost consternation, and from misconduct, deliver over a disease, “ not at first considered as dangerous,” into the hands of their favourite physician, in a very different state ;—of that physician, who has seen nothing of the progress of the disease, and to whom, perhaps, the process of the case has been but half revealed ;—The physician is thus called in circumstances unfavourable to his skill, and often too late to afford any aid ! but, one good and friendly office he will never fail to do ; he will be ready to cover from reproach the surgeon that employs him ; to protect those gains which he partakes of ; to vindicate every kind of practice, by words and acts ; continuing the unsuccessful prescriptions, or changing them by very prudent degrees.

But were every young physician of good education, unexceptionable morals, and uncontaminated with trade, allowed, by the interpretation of old, or

the enactment of new laws, to avail himself of his learning and skill; to visit and prescribe on equal terms with those apothecaries, in the circle of his own friends!—were the young physician allowed to advance slowly, and by honourable and independent means, in practice, reading and reflection, during the early years of his experience; increasing in wealth and independence, and improving his mind--the profession would undergo a blessed reformation. Having resources within himself, such a person employed as an ordinary attendant, would excite no false alarms, create no real dangers! The diseases “not dangerous, at least in the first instance,” would continue so, and terminate according to the first hopes! No overgrown physician, hurrying without humanity or deliberation through desultory practice, would be called in haste on account of unforeseen dangers! None such would be necessary to correct his proceedings, or justify his practice! A man of learning, and of principle like this, would have no feelings that could prevent him calling a consultation in any extreme case, of men as independent and learned as himself, and when he did so, it would be conducted with the decency and solemnity due to a suffering fellow creature

You have proved a weak friend to the kind of trading apothecaries whose cause you espouse, by bringing these questions before the world; and have pretty nearly proved, that there exists a “hugger-mugger conspiracy against the lives and

purses of the good people of this good town.”\* When you found the posture of things equally dangerous to yourself and your friends, and saw how possible it was, that in time a respectable young physician might be preferred even “in those diseases not reckoned, at least at the first, dangerous,” to an elder apprentice turned surgeon, you became wild, incoherent, and furious, with fear and jealousy, and published a manifesto, sayouring more of the bedlamite than the physician. Indeed, Sir, the following PROCLAMATION, if intended for wit, is most unfortunate: “The humour of it, quotha; here’s a fellow that frights humour out of her wits.”†

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\* These unmannerly expressions are used by this physician in a way which shows how insensible he is to all the decencies, either of colloquial or of written language, and to his own degrading connections in trade. “It is evident, that if the proposed interpretation of our law be adopted and sanctioned by our College, such a HUGGER-MUGGER CONSPIRACY against the lives and purses of the good people of this good town, would be not only practicable, but easy; one or two of the SENIOR PARTNERS or CONSPIRATORS playing the PHYSICIANS, while some of the JUNIORS played the SURGEON, and old and young equally played the APOTHECARY.” p. 67. This was when the question of his invaluable friend Mr Benjamin Bell entering into the College of Physicians was hinted at. He foresaw that the young ones, the groundlings, playing the parts of apothecaries, God knows how many, SEVEN;—seven, I believe, and the old one playing the doctor. They would all be very much the reverse of invaluable friends to the worthy Professor.

*Vide Censorian Letter, p. 69.*

† Merry Wives of Windsor.

“ I propose, as soon as the necessary diplomatic forms can be dispatched,\* to enter into a striet alliance, offensive and defensive, with the greatest potentate on earth ; one compared to whom the Grand Turk and the Emperor of Russia, and the Great Napoleon himself ! are but petty Princees in the realm of Lilliput ; a potentate under whose dominion they all must come.

“ In plain English, I mean to enter into partnership with an eminent UNDERTAKER. All circumstances at present are very favourable for this speculation ; (no doubt, Sir,) that most worthy and valuable member of society Mr Trotter, (why should you praise him so, Sir, he is a very honest man, but you are always unsparing of peoples character.—Well, Sir, Mr Trotter, what of him ?)—“ who is always ready to pay the last duties to his fellow citizens, is left alone in the management of a very extensive business. He will see at once how much it will be for his interest to have me for a partner—(very true, Sir,) nay, I have reason to believe that he has a great respect and esteem for me personally ; for whenever I enter his shop, he receives me with the most gracious smiles, and bows, as much as to say, “ Sir, you are my good customer, and my good friend,” &c. Besides, I remember well, that during the late war, when he played the eaptain of artillery, and I played the eaptain of the grenadiers (aye, Sir, that was playing, indeed !) he used to stick very elose to me,

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\* Vide Censorian Letter.

and keep up so noble a fire with his six pounder, &c.

(“ *Dixeris hæc inter varicosos centuriones.*”)

“ The firm of our house must be, **DEATH OR THE DOCTOR**; our **SIGN-POST** will be **SOMETHING NEW** and **VERY EDIFYING** to the good people of this city (aye Sir, to the milk-asses, is it not?) provided only they have courage to look, and read, as they run past it. There they shall see, “ some of the painful family of death, more hideous than their queen;” and they shall read a few **INSCRIPTIONS, SHORT AND PITHY!** such as the **BEST MEDICAL ADVICE ON THE LOWEST TERMS**—funerals furnished on the shortest notice:—Bleeding, blistering, &c.

“ The alarm will no doubt be great and general; every person of course expecting to hear the last trumpet!” &c. &c, “ The fifteen judges will vanish in a trice, like the witches in *Macbeth*, without the help of broomsticks:” (admirable, Sir,—bravo!) The whole college of justice will dissolve, and, like the baseless fabric of a vision, (aye, fifteen visions, Sir) leave not a wreck behind! (bravo, great and classical!)—The wittiest of our lawyers will not wait, or venture a single squib against us; though there is one ready cut and dry, primed and loaded to his hand,” &c. (bravo, noble captain of grenadiers!)

“ None of his Majesty’s good subjects in this city will be able to get a single mouthful of law, even for ready money! The honestest fellows will leave their bottle unfinished! Our worthiest magistrates will leave untasted the best dinner ever dressed at Fortune’s! Our military gentlemen, with all their fierce looks! and



fierce hats ! and huge sabres !\* will grow pale ! Then Tom Thumb at the thoughts of marriage, our volunteers will show how well they have learned the quick quick march : That gallant regiment the Irish Green Horse. (Holloa ! God-a mercy on us ! off and away with Irish Green Horse.)—Well ! well !

“ A whole squadron of Aid-de Camps will be sent to reconnoitre our position and force ! but, though they are all brave men, not one of them will dare to look on that which would appal the devil (bravo ! classical and exquisite) our noble Commander in Chief will immediately bestride his Arabian courser and gallop to the spot, to reconnoitre in person ; but like Theseus, when permitted to witness the death of Oedipus, will cover his eyes with his hands, unable to endure the horrors of the sight, (“ ah, me ! what sight ! ) a sight which would be enough to freeze the last drop of Plantagenet blood in his veins.” (“ O gentle Sir,—upon the heat and flame of your distemper sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look ? ) On him ! on him ! ”

“ Then “ greater than conquerors by a bold retreat”—the whole army, devil take the hindermost,

\* We must have the charity to believe, that the learned Professor means all this in ridicule of the witty stile of writing, and as an occasional illustration of the manner in which “ the Greek and Latin muses operate in boys, whose skulls are not impenetrable ! when DILIGENT APPLICATION is made to the PLACE APPOINTED BY NATURE, beginning in the fifth year to make NONSENSE VERSES, with BOGGLING AT IT.” Vide CENSORIAN LETTER, as formerly quoted.

will march off like!" oh, God knows what.—This is really too much—and yet it is not done.

"Then while his followers are cooling their heels! and sharing the feast of shells for want of better belly timber!" (bravo, elegant, and as far from vulgarity as either your last or your present story of the bag-pipe) "and listening to the pibrochs of my learned brother the professor of the bag-pipe in the Island of Sky, their noble chief will be freighted over by a second-sighted Charon, and his wife a witch of course! (bravo) to the Isle of Staffa! and descend into the cave of Fingal; and, after listening to a song with accompaniments from the shade of Ossian!" &c. Gracious heaven, what is this?

"Nonsense precipitate like running lead,  
That slips through cracks and zig-zags of the head,  
All that on folly frenzy could beget,  
Fruits of dull heat, and sootrekings of wit."

"Our bravest admirals, when sent to defend our shores, will not dare to anchor on this coast, when they descry our terrific standard! embroidered by the fair hands of the amiable Proserpina! and the accomplished Pandora; but will claw off with every rag of canvas they can spread, as if they saw breakers of burning brimstone just under their bowsprit," &c.

"Our judges will return to work out the remainder of their painful!!"—"Oh Jephtha, judge of Israel!"—I'll go no further.—

God bless your wits, which surely begin to unsettle, and grant you honest occupations, and a more

composed mind. Surely I have reason to be afraid, lest this book, if ever it should be read in any other country, should impress those who are strangers to your character or writings, with a belief, that I have been capable of forging the most crazy effusions, and ascribing them to you as excerpts from your happiest composition. Will it be received, think you, Sir, even in any part of the British dominions, that this, even this, passes for wit in the polite society of Edinburgh? That I have transcribed truly from the writings of Dr James Gregory, Professor of the Practice of Physic in the University of Edinburgh; who is still permitted to continue a public instructor of youth, and to perform the duties of a physician? I begin to be in pain more for my own character than yours.

In your very spirited Index to this quarto volume, you have entitled this splendid effusion, “a SCHEME for IMPROVING and EXTENDING much farther, the PRACTICE of PHYSIC in this CITY.” All your actions, Sir, have this benevolent tendency; and you are author of innumerable and most singular schemes, private and public, for extending the practice of physic in this city; and there is nothing so ingenious in your whole system, nothing so displays your natural sagacity and penetration, as the art with which you take off the public observation from some notorious contrivance, by substituting something like it, but different, “*obscuris vera involvens*,” masking quackery under mockery.

Have you taken no unusual steps in your profession? None! Are you no way conscious of having

attempted “ some singular deviations from the common practice of your profession ?” Have you taken no undue advantage of those learned and respectable men of this city, who have resolutely adhered to the modest dignified character of a Physician, as transmitted by their predecessors, and described by your father ? Have you never, under cover of this ‘buffoonery, printed, and secretly circulated, a HANDBILL more explicit than this mock advertisement, more offensive to the feelings of your brethren, more dangerous to the constitution of your profession ?—I have dragged you from the judgment-seat, which you had most audaciously, most impiously usurped, and I shall hold you up “ in the strong grasp of truth and justice,” to your profession, an object of scorn and contempt.



ADVERTISEMENT, or HAND-BILL, CIRCULATED BY  
 DR JAMES GREGORY, privately inclosed with  
 those things he calls Consultations.

“ A person who asks the advice of only one Physician, must, no doubt, be surprised, and may, perhaps, be displeased, at receiving the advice of two. It is therefore necessary to explain the reason ! of such a SINGULAR DEVIATION FROM THE COMMON PRACTICE of the PROFESSION !

“ For a long time past I have found it difficult, and sometimes impossible, to avoid considerable delays in answering professional letters, and in giving

my opinion and advice in writing, in cases the histories of which were sent to me from distant places. These delays were always vexatious to myself, and often distressing to my patients, many of whom earnestly required to have my answer and advice by return of post, and all of whom would confidently expect to receive it in two or three days at farthest. But this no exertions of diligence could enable me to accomplish. Independently of the time required to consider many of the cases sent to me for my opinion, the time often required to write (whether with my own hand, or by dictating to a secretary, as long had been my practice) a proper opinion and advice in one case was more than I could command, from the more urgent calls of professional duty, in several days; and it sometimes happened that I received several such letters and cases in one day, perhaps more than I could answer properly in ten.

“ The delay in answering them was the more vexatious to some of those patients who consulted me by letter, that I was not at liberty to answer their letters just in the order in which I received them, by being obliged to answer the most urgent of them in preference to the less urgent, in which a delay, even of several days, could be of no material bad consequence! These delays and inconveniencies have often been much increased by my being called to distant visits in the country, implying, necessarily, an absence of several days from Edinburgh, with little or no time or opportunity to answer such letters, or give my opinion and advice in such cases as



I had previously received! while, in the meantime, several more were accumulating upon me!

“ The consequence has been, that I have almost constantly been in arrear of professional writing, and that, in the course of the last three months, this arrear has gradually increased upon me!

“ In these circumstances I found myself reduced to the dilemma of either refusing to give my advice in writing to patients (whether residing in Edinburgh or at a distance) who required it of me; or else procuring the aid of one of my brethren, who might assist me in that part! and occasionally in other parts! of my professional duty—”

“ The former alternative would certainly have been thought very DISOBLIGING! at least,—if NOT WORSE! I have therefore preferred the latter; and I think myself very fortunate in having obtained the assistance of ——— as my COADJUTOR! in that part of my professional labours!”

“ It will easily be believed, that in such circumstances, for my own sake, as well as that of my patients, I should anxiously wish to have the best assistance that I could procure: But ——— has been so well known, even from early youth, as a man of talents, and learning, and science, that there can be no occasion for any testimonial of mine in his favour: He was for several years my pupil in the University of Edinburgh, in which he took his degrees of Doctor of Physic in 1803, and he is now a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in this city.

“ The arrangement that is made leaves each of us at full liberty to have patients of whom the other knows nothing, which in many cases must be very desirable to our respective patients, as well as to ourselves individually ! but no written directions to any patients will be given under our joint names, that has not positively been the subject of conversation between us. Every such paper as the enclosed of course expresses our joint opinion.

“ By this arrangement, therefore ! patients who consult me can lose nothing ! As the arrangement is made not only FOR THE BENEFIT OF MY PATIENTS, but ALSO FOR OUR OWN, and chiefly for MY CONVENIENCY, it is on no account to BRING ADDITIONAL EXPENCE on those persons ! who may do me the honour to ask my professional advice !

(Signed) JAMES GREGORY.\*

*St Andrew's Square. }  
Edinburgh, 1st Dec. 1806. }*

\* This unprecedented advertisement in print, as I here deliver it, came into my hand, accompanied with the following laconic note :

“ DEAR FITZHERBERT,

“ Dr Gregory has given me this paper of directions and prescriptions for you. The printed paper will inform you why he delayed so long. I hope you will never have occasion for his medicines. Yours sincerely,

*George's Square, }  
16th December. }*

ARTHUR CLIFFORD.”

This is not “ short and pithy,” but a circuitous and desultory manner of writing, very natural when a man is embarrassed : But it is explicit,—it is the CIRCULAR ADVERTISEMENT of a FIRM or COPARTNERY OF PHYSICIANS : It not only announces “ best medical advice on the lowest terms,” but “ double medical consultations for single fees,” “ now executed on the shortest notice.” If this be not “ a SCHEME for IMPROVING and EXTENDING the PRACTICE OF THIS CITY,” I surely have no right comprehension of the use of these terms. If any one be inclined to dispute with us the purpose, it must only be one half of the proposition they can be inclined to dispute ;—some may be of opinion, that the merit of your scheme consists more in EXTENDING than in IMPROVING, which no doubt lessens the merit of the invention, and may be invidiously and cruelly stated as an objection to the whole. Others again will question your right to accept a single fee, while thus delegating your consultations, and occupying the time due to that first of all the duties of a Physician, to the more profitable and pleasing task of defaming your brethren ! and will wonder, how the Monros and Rutherfords, and other SINGLE PHYSICIANS, depending merely upon their established reputation and professional skill, can earn a single fee, while the public have offered to them freely, by a Professor of Physic and his philosophical partners, “ DOUBLE CONSULTATIONS for SINGLE FEES.” Some will admire these inscriptions, short and pithy, and will feel that no “ new nor more edifying signpost” can be required ; but all must pity the per-

son, whether a man of talents or a man of no talents, who has the unhappiness, while associated with you in such a “luggar-muggar conspiracy,” to read your dissertations on the meanness and cunning, the crooked policy and disingenuity, of the Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians! What must he not feel when he reads about the foul and perilous attempt of “crawling down the chimney or up the privy,” for purposes not over-virtuous. If he have any thing of that political sagacity which your society is so well calculated to inspire, he will scent some danger; if he have instinct, he must dread the ridiculous fate of sticking fast in those crooked passages, with a cruel certainty of smelling of the business all his life.

I am now to take my leave of you and your voluminous quartos for ever: You will continue to write, and I shall be the subject of your future calumny, which I declare to you I shall bear as meekly as ever your most infatuated patient did your most hazardous prescriptions, and with a purer faith. I think that you may accidentally do me good, for your reproaches bear now a very unequivocal meaning;—but I am sure that your writings in this kind can do no harm. I have so explained the motives of your enmities and rancours,—that henceforth I would hope, your ill report will be thought no scandal; that you can murder no reputation but your own:

“*Efficiam posthac ne quenquam voce læcessas.*”

But, before we part, I owe you one favourable testimony of no slight value; for surely the truest mark

of genius and judgment is, to fix our admiration on some great character, and endeavour to accomplish, in our own person, all that we have imagined to be excellent in the model—and this you have done. There are two characters great enough to be universally known, which you declare yourself ambitious of rivalling, and it cannot be denied that you actually excel them. You are “an ABERDONIAN,” your definition of which is, that you were born with so keen and cunning a genius, that, had you been educated as an attorney, and settled in the south, you would have soon had your own share of the county of Middlesex! and though a physician, and settled in the lesser metropolis of Edinburgh, you do not despair of performing exploits almost as singular, for “their medical gentlemen are as sharp in their way as their attornies can be for their very hearts.”

This fundamental part of your character you inherited from nature; and you should thank God, and say no more of it: But that superadded character, which was to be produced only by care and culture, must have cost you infinite pains. You announced with such an air of native confidence and security, your intention of sustaining the character of Drawcansir, that it was plain you could not fail. “And who, it will be naturally asked, \* is this Drawcansir, who sets all his professional brethren at defiance, and treats their opinions, and controversies, and observations, with such contemptuous freedom? Is he an empyric, or a dogmatist? What are his dog-

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\* Vide Incurmary Memorial.



mas? The questions are very pertinent, and may easily be answered." Very true, Sir; very true; the questions are most pertinent, to yourself you mean, and the answer of the ingenious Mr Bays most apt: "Why, Sir, a fierce hero that snubs up kings, baffles armies, and does what he pleases, without regard to members, good manners, or justice." Nor is the condition of the Royal College unlike that of the two simple kings of Brentford, while they are putting the cup to their lips, and only meditating and speculating on the appearance of this ferocious personage, and while they say one to another,

"Tho', brother, this grum stranger be a clown!

He'll leave us, sure, a little to gulp down!"

He snatches the cup from the two kings of Brentford,—

"Whoe'er to gulp one drop of this dare think,

I'll stare away his very power to drink.

I drink, I huff, I strutt, look big, and stare,

And all this I can do, because I dare!"

"But pray, Mr Bays, why do you make the kings let him use them so scurvily?—Pho THAT'S TO RAISE THE CHARACTER OF DRAWCANSIR."



## LETTER XV.

ON PROFESSIONAL CHARACTER.—THE STUDIES IN WHICH A PHYSICIAN SHOULD endeavour to EXCEL.—The means by WHICH TALENTS AND REPUTATION MAY BE OBTAINED.

Dr Gregory, after bestowing so much pains in defaming his Rivals, traduces himself:—Under the name of DRAW-CANCIR, he reviles his Profession, ridicules the Science, and declares the Facts of Medicine to be Lies! the Theories stark nonsense! and the Remedies most relied on, to be in the proportion of Ninety-nine in the Hundred of no avail!

Dr Gregory proclaims himself “a great Philosopher,” a Deception which proves his ruin:—Describes a most delirious Metaphysical Demelée with the Infirmary Clerks, and proclaims his Metaphysical Essay the Touchstone of Veracity and Talents!—The Value of Metaphysics questioned—This Science suspected of disturbing the Judgment and depraving the Affections; of engendering proud mean notions of superiority, while it incapacitates the mind for the study of Nature, or the affairs and duties of the World.

Physical, and especially Anatomical, Studies, recommended as the best sources of judicious Reflections, and humane and sympathising Feelings—The Characters of a Prescribing and of a Reasoning Physician contrasted.—Dr Gregory suspected to be a PRESCRIBING PHYSICIAN:—Ninety-nine of his Hundred Prescriptions having confessedly failed, he is committed to a Hospital, there to try upon the Sick the efficacy of his WIT.

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You have done an irreparable injury to your profession, in exposing talents which so well deserve to be concealed, and proving to the world how little sense or goodness is necessary to the character of a great Physician. “Go, (said the Chancellor Oxenstiern to his son, when sending

him to a congress of ambassadors, the young man expressing a diffidence in his own talents) go," said Oxenstiern, "and see with your own eyes, how little talent is required to guide the world."

For errors of temper and moments of passion, for slighter jealousies and occasional irritations, which the best of men will, at times, give way to, we make every allowance; but who can endure to see one born to academic honours, and bound by every dear recollection of a father's virtues and a father's counsels, to uphold a reputation for learning and virtue, descend from this nobility to embark in trade, and abandon science, to lay deliberate plans for supplanting his rivals, and traducing them?

Far from despising hereditary claims, I have ever held them the highest incitements to virtue. The honourable distinction of being born of a race conspicuous for learning, prepares early and zealous friends, excites the expectation of the world, and opens, with happy omens, the entrance of a young man into life. He whose father has excelled, should strive to excel; and in his memory, "his father's precepts all alone should live unmixed with baser matter." His own good fortune should beget a gracious temper towards others less favoured, and should impress upon his mind, even in early youth, a dignified sense of duty, a steady attachment to virtue and science, and a deep and secret ambition to excel.

In this predicament did you stand; and to no human being should I have looked with more confidence for amiable dispositions, and great achievements in science, than to the son of GREGORY. Your

father taught those dispositions, and your public duty enjoined these studies. “The eminence of your station gave you a commanding view of your duty; the road which led to honour was open to your view.” \*

“A time there is, when like a thrice-told tale,  
Long rilled life of sweets can yield no more,  
But from our comment on the comedy,  
Pleasing reflections on parts well sustained.”

You should have been a professor admired for professional learning, distinguished for the professional virtues of goodness, and gentleness: You should have been found cultivating, in hours of retirement, the accomplishments of a gentleman, and of a scholar: Influence, respect, and well earned riches, should have flowed upon you, when that period of life approached in which our best rewards are the remembrance of good deeds, and the favourable opinion of the world.

But you have only affected the characters you should have practised, and have not preserved pure the *sacros mentis recessus*,—“the sacred fountains of your peace:” You have not treasured up for yourself remembrances of good actions and a useful well regulated life. Be assured, that while you poured out your calumny against your brethren, and distributed gratis volumes to influence public opinion, and corrupt the affections of their friends, you little injured any but your own reputation: You “put rancours in the vessel of your peace:” Your conduct,

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\* Junius Letter, XXIII.

far from the purity which your station required, is doomed to be for ever a subject of suspicion, and likely to be quoted as a warning.

It may seem unjust, that I pay no homage to those talents you are supposed to possess; that I express no humane wish that you should repair the injuries done your profession, and regain your usefulness in society, and your peace of mind. But indeed your talents are not of a kind, that I can either envy or approve! I know not, though I were possessed of such talents, refined beyond all comprehension, to what uses I could apply them, unless I could condescend to imitate your strange way of life: And as for reform! who that knows Dr Gregory, the necessities of his now changed state, the conditions on which he holds his share of practice; who that knows how little humility or modesty belong to his nature, would entertain so extravagant an expectation!

The greatest of all incapacities is an ill regulated mind:—Yours, hardened in hostility, and callous to reproof, is not to be wrought upon by any natural means. Your temper and your alliances have involved you in endless enmities: a weak mistaken pride has detached you from every elegant or useful study; and ignorance of your profession, and acknowledged ill success, has taught you to decry all the acknowledged principles of the medical art, and to deny its efficacy! From you no rival will expect generous conduct; the profession will never more look to you for improvements in science; no wise man will imagine you obedient to reason, or capable of reform! you must continue for ever to revile, to



rave, and to practise! though I were to urge you by all kinds of conjuration to forsake your way of life!

—“ T’were bootless, as issue precepts  
To the Leviathan to come on shore.”

By which of all your talents and virtues you were entitled to proclaim yourself a reformer of professional morals, I am at a loss to imagine. But I know, that it would have given some weight to your opinions, had you been careful, first to establish for yourself a high reputation in medical science: It would have been well had your diligence been perfect, and your example pure and spotless, before you had differed with the Royal College on a moral cause.

How the grave and learned men of your university relish your coarse mockeries; what the professors of philosophy and the “*literæ humaniores*” think of your stile; how the Stewarts, and Playfairs, and Christisous, men of learning and taste, feel, when they open the classical essays of their fellow-professor, on medical discipline and morals, it were perhaps a presumption on my part to conjecture; but, if the world believes this school to be in its decline, yours will hardly be regarded as the genius that is to renew its honours, and all who have their interests interwoven with its prosperity, may well think your advent ominous, your intents not charitable. With a vitiated taste, and coarse feelings, you persist in believing yourself a great, witty, and most elegant author; and such is the selfishness of your nature, that, if you enjoy but a breath of vulgar, and most worthless praise, you

care not what becomes of all the sciences, and all their worshippers ! To you what is their learning, and the awkward ungainly solemnity of their professional manners ? their philosophical dreams, their theories, what are these, compared with the transcendent wit of your quartos ; or their stupid reputation, compared with blaze of celebrity which emanates from the incomparable Dr Gregory, the poet, metaphysician, and orator !—the reformer of medicine and of surgery, the champion of the poor ?

You have already acknowledged \* “ singular deviations from the common practice of your profession :” And you have been at pains, in that vain and foolish character you have drawn of yourself, to display all the bad propensities of your nature, the embryos of innumerable quarrels and endless revilings : You seem proud to shew how much you hate our profession, and despise the science ; and, in charity to your very enemies, you save them the ungracious task of conjecturing, what kind of ignorance, what disappointments in practice, have begot this universal hatred : You have saved them the pain of guessing at your secret thoughts,—those proud, vain thoughts with which you are distracted.

#### CHARACTER OF DR GREGORY BY HIMSELF.

“ And who, it will naturally be asked, is this Drawcansir, who sets all his professional brethren at defiance, and treats their opinions, and controver-

sies, and observations, with such contemptuous freedom? Is he an empiric, or a dogmatist? What are his dogmas? The questions are very pertinent, and may easily be answered, thus:

“ He neither is, nor ever was, nor ever will be, either an empiric or a dogmatist. He would have been a keen dogmatist, but that he found at least NINETY NINE in the HUNDRED OF MEDICAL DOGMAS WERE FALSE, and MANY OF THEM STARK NON-SENSE! He would have been a determined empiric, but that he found at least NINETY-NINE IN THE HUNDRED OF EMPIRICAL FACTS! WERE AS FALSE! and more than that proportion of their REMEDIES AS INSIGNIFICANT AND AS DANGEROUS, as any of the dogmas of their opponents. Of course, he now lives a sad outcast from both parties, just like a man excommunicated as an athiest, by a congregation of fanatics, and expelled as a fanatic by a Royal Academy of athiests. He is made of the same stuff, and put together in the same manner as other men! and, of course, in all probability, is neither wiser nor better than they are.”

“ Far from being more placid and tractable, he is more irascible and obstinate than most men!! and if he had ever engaged in medical disputes, would probably have been as violent, as absurd, as implacable, and as ridiculous, as any of his predecessors or contemporaries. He has such a GENIUS FOR QUARRELING with his professional brethren that, without even the pretence of any difference in medical opinions, and purely on account of certain differences in morality, he has QUARRELLED WITH SOME OF THEM IRRECONCILEABLY, AND REFUSED EVER AGAIN TO

CONSULT WITH THEM ; first telling them, in the plainest possible terms, the reasons of that unalterable resolution ; just to prevent any misunderstanding, or the repetition of such scenes as we read of in *Gil Blas*. He knows, accordingly, that some of his professional brethren would be glad to see HIM HANGED ! and he would not remain very long inconsolable, if the apotheosis of some of them were performed, or if they “ should perform it themselves in that ignoble manner.”

He has taught the theory and practice of physic in the University of Edinburgh for FOUR-AND-TWENTY YEARS !!! WITHOUT ONCE THROWING OUT A TUB TO AMUSE THE WHALE. He never thought he had ingenuity enough to make such a tub ! or dexterity enough to manage any of the numberless ready-made tubs which were floating around him. He observed, to his great comfort, that he had no occasion to take that trouble, as the WHALE has always found some tub to amuse itself withal, and has never yet shewn the smallest inclination either TO SWALLOW OR OVERSET HIM AND HIS LITTLE BARK. As he never did, nor ever intends to do IT any harm, he is not in the least afraid of the WHALE. He has not had wisdom enough to keep himself out of all disputes and controversies, EVEN IN SCIENCE ! and in those wherein he has engaged, he has been ABUNDANTLY ACRIMONIOUS ; as his opponents (probably) will be ready to certify on oath ; or, if they should not, it is of little consequence ; the fact may be established without their help, or in spite of them. But hitherto, notwithstanding all temptations and provocations, and plenty of bad examples, he has escaped the folly of

any medical disputes or controversies; not by any superiority of understanding, for he knows that men, much wiser and abler, and more learned than he is, have fallen into that folly; but by his **STRONG SENSE OF RIDICULE**, which on that point was **TO HIM IRRESISTIBLE!** From his earliest youth, he was admitted **BEHIND THE CURTAIN**, and let into the **SECRETS OF THE MEDICAL DRAMA**. Having acquired a little notion of some other sciences, and of science in general, before he engaged in the study of physic, he was from the first both mortified and entertained with the contrast which he saw. He soon perceived, that with respect to physic, each successive age had much more trouble to unlearn the bad than to learn the good, of those who went before it, and still more, to distinguish between the good and the bad which itself produced. After two-and-thirty of the best years of his life, spent in learning, in teaching, and in **PRACTISING PHYSIC**, he has found much to **CONFIRM**, and **NOTHING TO SHAKE THAT UNFAVOURABLE OPINION OF HIS OWN PROFESSION, AND OF A VAST MAJORITY OF THOSE WHO HAVE TAUGHT AND PRACTISED IT!!!** Being a great philosopher," &c.

Precious testimonies these to the truth and excellency of our art, and most consolatory to the public! Something, surely, you have mistaken, either your own genius, or that of your profession: You assuredly believe it to be a fit subject for derision and ribaldry, and such scrambling wit as the scoffers at religion and science, at all that is respectable or useful,



delight in. But if, from what you do know of our profession, it seems unworthy of so great a philosopher, there is for yourself a proud retreat in the recesses of metaphysics, and for your profession a chance of recovering the respectability it has lately lost.

You have done well, Sir, in betaking yourself to metaphysics for your philosophy, and to trade for DAILY BREAD: But while others may admire the magnanimity of this open avowed contempt, I have been long impressed with a suspicion that you deny the excellence of our profession from ignorance, and doubt its resources chiefly from your want of success! That you have, by the accident of your birth been devoted to an art, at least as far above your genius, as below your ambition.

It is more natural for you to deny the usefulness of the science, than to doubt your own capacity, or to suspect any thing disorderly in your methods of study. Unable to attain the mild and dignified character of a physician, and the gentle and temperate virtues enjoined by your father, you have been driven into the opposite extreme, and given yourself up to the incurable ambition of being admired for rudeness: In flat despair of attaining a fair reputation, you affect a higher philosophy, and inveigh against your profession as unworthy of your brilliant talents.

That you are little skilled in physick, is a lamentable truth, which many had observed before you had the effrontery to declare it. "Being a great philosopher" has been your ruin. You find, you say,

“ ninety-nine at least, in the hundred, of medical dogmas false ; and many of them stark nonsense !” You find “ ninety-nine of the empirical facts, (i. e. of the facts learnt by experience, and no way deduced from hypothesis) false ; and more than that proportion of the remedies, insignificant and dangerous ! “ You have been admitted, (you say,) behind the curtain, and let into the secret of the Medical Drama !”

Indeed, Sir, this reduces our *Materia Medica* into a very compendious form, “ less than the hundredth part of something more useless than a hypothesis !” This is metaphysics with a vengeance : and you have decried the professors of the medical science of all times, past and present, as below any other despicable class of rational beings ! Pray, Sir, may I, without impoliteness, request to know, whether the following extravagance is to have a literal interpretation, or is merely intended “ to raise the character of Drawcansir ?” You have taught, you say, and practised (now) six-and-thirty years, finding always something to confirm, and nothing to shake your unfavourable opinion of your profession, (that is, of your science) and of a majority of those who have taught and practised it !” “ You would as soon, (you declare,) think of building a magnificent dwelling house on the Godwin Sands, as of building your fame on a work of medical reasoning, or medical observations !” “ You have studied,” you moreover inform us, “ medical systems and reasonings, and observations, till you were sick, and tried MANY DOZENS ! of boasted, but very useless

remedies, till you were ASHAMED OF WHAT YOU WERE DOING !!!\* Dreadful reeapitulations, for those whose friends have been exposed to the necromancies of your art.

Ashamed of ill success, perhaps ill conduct, in administering those drugs which others have found preeious, there remained no resource for you but this: Ashamed of disappointment in every trial almost to the hundredth time, you have left but a little space truly betwixt the ninety ninth and the hundredth disappointment to be filled up with any possible success. What is this you have been doing? Are we to acknowledge this to be the general impression concerning medical theories, or the usual course of our practice? To proclaim such opinions obstinately, with all the levity of irreclaimable folly, to speak with perfect unconcern of general facts, including such dreadful individual sufferings! Dare you declaim thus, and still practise?

I must and will remind you, that your conduct is as unlike that of all your profession, as your ill success is unprecedented, You are speaking with this indecent levity of diseases, in which the lives of your fellow-creatures have been at issue; publishing calamities in which every individual in the city should take a deep interest; proclaiming disappointments, which, if inseparable from our profession, are concealed by the prudent and charitable! you are recapitulating, in most unfeeling language, a life of disappointments and distresses which should make a

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\* Infirmary Memorial, p. 4158.

man's heart sink within him ! Even though unjustly reproached by the uncharitable and malevolent, a man of sensibility should feel mortified even at accidental ill success : But “ you, by your own interdiction, stand accused.”

That vanity which taught you to affect rudeness, and despise useful studies, has made you divulge disappointments which should for ever have been concealed ; and proclaim opinions which you imagined set you above all competition, in some station far above the improvers of medicine, or the credulous plebeian physicians, who “ trust that they have a good conscience,” and believe in the science which they practise. My opinions on all points of my profession are opposite to yours : It is my opinion that it is not a cheat : It is my opinion, that, as a department of natural history, the study of the structure of the human body, of its functions, of its disorders, and of their remedies, is interesting above all others, and will disgrace no man's genius, however great his acquirements or his talents !—a study infinitely more rational than that vain philosophy, the science of words, in which you imagine that you excel.

It is my decided opinion, authorised by that of the most distinguished philosophers, that the science of metaphysics, though useful in improving the intellect, is inimical to all other sciences, and most especially to the studies of nature ; and unfits a man for useful observation, and the ordinary occupations of life ! that the delirium of metaphysics is an ill preparation for the investigation of natural phenome-



na; much more for hearkening to the complainings of sickly langour and pain.

“ Not to know at large of things remote  
From use, obscure and subtle, but to know  
That which before us lies in daily life,  
Is the prime wisdom; what is more is fume,  
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence.”

It is my opinion, too, that whatever private studies or amusement a gentleman selects for his solace in hours of relaxation, or for the improvement of his taste, or lighter talents, his profession should be as his religion, and to attain excellency in it, his constant endeavour and chief pride: And, finally, it is my opinion, that no man need abandon his profession, to seek reputation from opposite and discordant studies; that excellence in his profession, procured by diligence, and maintained by constant study, with a faithful, sympathising, and kind discharge of its duties, is the direct, the honourable road to distinction, and to all that a worthy man should desire, an honest independence, and the affection and confidence of his fellow-citizens. I am sure I express nothing but what I feel, and I hope I say nothing that misbecomes me, when I assure you, that I am proud to differ with you thus, on every moral cause.

“ Being a great philosopher,”—has been your ruin: Far be it from me to decide, on my own authority, the merits of a science in which you declare a Royal College utterly ignorant, and yourself alone in the world a perfect adept! But METAPHYSICS, if I mistake not, is suspected even by the soundest philosophers, as a very inadequate means, either of dis-



covering or representing truth ; and is sure to beget an idle, cunning, restless, vindictive disposition.

“ At least distempered, discontented thoughts,  
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,  
Blown up with high conceits engendering pride.”

To this fatal bias, I am willing to ascribe the defects of your education, and the errors of your life : A certain nobleman, who had yet the merit of making political economy his study, before he made it his profession, began his career by doubting, and refuting the doctrines of Smith ! You, when you had made, I suppose, nearly the same proficiency in metaphysics, imagined yourself a prodigy in the learned world, and shouted defiance against the whole host of Humes, and Reids, and Priestlys ! you imagined yourself master of a problem, that would put an end to all doubts ; and having defied all the chiefs in vain, descended at last to make your experiments on the credulity of the infirmary clerks !

Bayes, your illustrious predecessor, says with great good humour, “ MY PLAY IS MY TOUCHSTONE. When a man tells me such a one is a very clever fellow,—Is he so ? says I ; what do I do, but bring him presently to see this play, if he likes it, I know what to think of him ; if not, your most humble servant, Sir, I’ll no more of him.” In this humour did you publish your essays, and with such experiments have you tortured your metaphysical vassals, great and small ! all who would submit to your experiments, from Lord M\*\*\*\*\*k down to the said couple of Infirmary clerks ! The annals

of Moorfields would hardly supply such a scene as I shall represent in your own words.

“ Having learnt, by some years experience, how TO DEAL WITH SUCH DISPUTANTS ! so as to bring them to a full point, I proposed briefly this ! “ Consider patiently what I have stated : If you think me right, say so at once, like a man of sense and candour ; if you think me wrong, revise your own—argument,” &c. I engage to print it exactly in your own words, WITH MY ANSWER TO IT, ON THE PRINCIPLES WHICH YOU HAVE SEEN. This was the TEST proposed to all those with WHOM I ATTEMPTED to reason about MY ESSAY !!! “ with one only exception, and this one of no consequence, it had invariably answered my purpose on all but one, on whom I had occasion to try it.” \*

“ MY USUAL TEST SUCCEEDED PERFECTLY WITH MY ANTAGONIST, THE AUTHOR of the ANONYMOUS PAMPHLET ! indeed it operated like a CHARM. In FOUR AND TWENTY HOURS I GOT BACK THE PAPERS, and along with them received from him a letter, in which he DECLINED all FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE WITH ME ; desired me to use what freedom I pleased with his printed pamphlet, but requested that his written papers might be COMMITTED TO THE FLAMES. This request, of course, was instantly complied with ; though in the burning them, I at the same time burned about a third part of my own answer to them, which, for the sake of easy and immediate reference, had been written on the alternate PAGES of his paper that been left BLANK !” †

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\* Second Quarto Memorial by Dr Gregory.

† Ibid.

“ This curious correspondence was going on between the months of January 1796 and October 1797. From that time to this my antagonist has not ONCE SPOKEN TO ME, or appeared even TO KNOW ME when we met in the streets, as we have done very often ; and I dare say he never will speak to me again ; nor do I wish that he should.”

“ MY ESSAY, which the Author of the pamphlet chose to run his head against with so LITTLE CEREMONY, was, in its nature and object, the most PROVOKING AND UNPARDONABLE work that ever appeared in science ! (extremely modest.) It was composed and published avowedly, not only to detect favourite sophism and error in science, which MANY MODERN PHILOSOPHERS have maintained with the GREATEST ARROGANCE !!! but also to EXPOSE THEM TO REPROACH AND RIDICULE ! by shewing demonstratively that they had NEVER BELIEVED IT ! In short, I undertook both to detect their sophism, and to convict them of FALSEHOOD ! This had very generally been suspected, and even said ; but the means of proving it had not occurred to any person before me !!! ” \*

“ I carefully, for many years, took all the precautions that I have already mentioned, and gave to those whom it concerned, the most ample opportunities of VINDICATING THEMSELVES : But EVERY EXPERIMENT of THIS KIND, while it was a sort of trial of the VALIDITY OF MY REASONING ! was as certainly and directly a TRIAL OF THE UNDERSTAND-

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\* Scurrilous Memorial, No. 2, p. 93.

ING AND VERACITY OF THE PERSON ON WHOM IT WAS MADE ! And this UNGRACIOUS kind of TEST ! was the only proof I ever could expect to have from them, that they found my reasoning valid, and my harsh inference with respect to them just and irrefragable ; for, supposing me to have been RIGHT in EVERY RESPECT, AND THEM TO HAVE BEEN SENSIBLE OF IT, I WAS SURE THEY WOULD NEVER ACKNOWLEDGE IT!!!

MY ESSAY IS MY TOUCHSTONE." \*

When it thus appears, that all this extraordinary scene is not the mere turmoil of the moment, the irritation produced by an uncivil pamphlet, but your permanent state of mind, continuing for years, I cannot but regard your condition with sympathy ; and wonder less at your devolving your consultations to another, than at your continuing, either directly or indirectly, to prescribe.

This is not the state of mind of one who is called upon to feel for the bodily sufferings of his fellow-creatures, or to investigate the causes of disorders : Surely no prudent father, friend, or guardian, whose purpose may be to train a young man to any charitable calling or useful art, will hear without pain of his being seduced into such studies as inspire at once pride bordering on insanity, and the most diabolical vindictive passions. This being the occupation in our University of Physicians, Professors, Students,

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\* Those who wish to see the detail of this METAPHYSICAL WAR with the two INFIRMARY CLERKS, will find it written in the said scurrilous Memorial, expanded over twenty or thirty quarto pages.



and Clerks; of those who should be learning, and teaching the structure of the human body, and the details of a practical art—well might Beddoes speak of the “WINDY AND WORDY SCHOOL OF EDINBURGH.” The disease which begins thus in the head, corrupts the whole body, “*Utique in corpore, sic in imperio, gravissimus est morbus qui a capite diffunditur.*”

Bishop Barclay says of metaphysics, that it is of the number of those preparatory studies which “may be compared with crops, raised not for the sake of the harvest, but to be ploughed in as a dressing to the land.” What will a head filled with the Categories of Aristotle, the Forty Summa Genera of Bishop Wilkins, or even the refined and exquisite Metaphysics of Dr Gregory, do, in curing the maladies of the human body? These are opiates, not food; to be tasted, not devoured; and, after indulging in such perilous stuff, a man would do well to reduce himself to his NON NATURALS again without delay; for we have many proofs, besides the present, that these are speculations which stronger heads than yours can bear without hardly damage.

Are these the studies by which you are to improve the science of medicine, or to learn to perform your own duties?

“*De nihilo nihil, in nihilum nil posse reverti?*

*Hoc est quod palles? cur quis non prandeat, hoc est?”*

Why, Sir, studies like these, have been the scorn of wise men in all ages; and it is my persuasion, that you might have been as well employed in drawing horoscopes, or studying necromancy and the art of



magic. Metaphysics seem a pretty puzzle for grown children, which those are most delighted with who least understand it. The science may be profitable in improving the powers of the mind, and is usually resorted to, by those best acquainted with its uses, for solving deep and doubtful points of philosophy; but applied to the occupations and duties of ordinary life, to the rules of a profession, and the simple notions of right and wrong; to those moralities which every plain honest man understands and practises; it has a most suspicious aspect; and we are apt to infer, that no one can be driven to the unhappy expedient of vindicating his veracity, honour, or good conduct, by such reasoning, but for one of two purposes,—to exhibit a vain, exploded science; or to confound the question, and perplex honest and fair judging men.

Cased in metaphysics, you imagine yourself to be covered all over with complete armour, from head to heel, from top to toe! But you forget, Sir, that the parts left open at the joinings of your mail, are the most vital. What Melmoth says of verbal criticism, may be very truly applied to this science of words: “I look upon verbal criticism, as it is generally exercised, to be no better than a sort of *Legerdemain*, by which the sense or nonsense of any passage may be artfully conveyed away, and something introduced in its stead, as *BEST SUITS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROFOUND JUGGLER.*”

“It unfortunately happens (says Mr Stewart) that the same turn of mind which is favourable to philosophical pursuits, unless it be kept under proper regulation, is extremely apt to *DISQUALIFY US FOR*

APPLYING our knowledge to use in the EXERCISE OF THE ARTS, and the CONDUCT OF AFFAIRS."

Whether you have subjected your philosophical propensities to all those prudent restraints, is a question which you have yourself, I believe, pretty publicly decided. But there is little doubt that you have been guilty of a great and irremediable oversight in your plan of education, and, by what Mr Stewart calls "A PARTIAL INJUDICIOUS CULTURE OF THE MIND," have fostered an insane pride in acquirements little conducive to the business of the world, or the duties of a physician, and deadening to all true ambition and useful study. By these vain speculations you have nourished, not a great and respectable pride, repressed by good sense within just bounds, and urging you on to deep professional studies, and great literary efforts; but a trivial vanity, boiling and foaming round every petty obstacle. The uses you have made of those talents for logic and metaphysics, show how little those sciences suit a man of integrity or honour.

A practical metaphysician is the jesuit of modern literature: Have we not reason to suspect his purposes, who first declares that the College of Physicians, and the whole Body of Divines, know not the very form of a syllogism or dilemma; and yet appeals from those learned bodies to the vulgar, and pretends to adjust every point of morality by metaphysic aid? This is indeed fathoming a mill-pond with the deep-sea-line; or, like the taylor of Laputa, taking a man's altitude by the quadrant, and calculating the proportions of his body by algebra.

No more metaphysics, Sir, if you mean what is honest and fair : Brand me, since it is your pleasure, along with the College of Physicians, with what epithets you please, of ignorant or barbarous ; but, I beseech you, no more metaphysics, in questions which every man of plain sense or honest principles is able to resolve. You have but one damned plea, the plea of necessity, for using the shuffling, equivocating, hypocritical language of metaphysics, in your own base affairs :

“ He that stands upon a slippery place,  
Makes nice of no vile stay to hold him up.”

No one, who is aware of the effects of this intoxicating philosophy on the human mind, will wonder at your contempt of your profession, or your neglect of Anatomy, Chemistry, Botany, and all those parts of physics which might enable you to excel. A man, to have a head happily disposed for metaphysics, must have an imagination prompting him, if not habitually, yet frequently, to doubt, “the fundamental laws of human belief:” He must doubt whether he is the same person he was yesterday ! whether the material world have any real existence, independent of percipient beings ! whether the vegetables, and the animals, the earth, and all in it dwell ; this brave o’erhanging firmament exist, or are but as a phantasm, or an idle dream ! He must pass through this life, and close his eyes in death, doubtful to the last syllable of recorded time, whether he is forsaking the earth, and the skies, and all that seems to exist around him ! Whether he is passing from a world of physical existence into a world of spirits.

By the frequency of those delirious reveries, he is to estimate his aptness for metaphysieal science: "He (says Turgot) who has never doubted of the existence of matter, may be assured that he has no turn for metaphysical disquisitions." To imagine, for a moment, that you uniformly, and constantly, believe the existence of a material world, would, therefore, be doing an injustice to your exalted genius: You must have doubted a thousand times the existence of matter: you must have doubted, and still must doubt the existence, not only of Livers, and Lungs, and Brains, and other special Organs of the human body, but of men and women! And though, by some unfortunate chance, it has fallen to your lot, to cleanse the Trachea of superfluous mucus, and to cure the Liver and Spleen, and always to purge the stomach and bowels to their pristine health; it would be an insult to suppose, that you had ever descended so far below the dignity of your favourite science, as to know practically that such solid and substantial organs exist, or that they constitute, when patched together, a living body, to minister to the great and perpetual mystery of the human mind.

You know not, probably, how to distinguish a section of one of these organs from another, a section of the Liver from a section of the Spleen; yet you have the good fortune to cure their diseases! You have thus had the singular felicity of resolving a problem of physies very perplexing, and in your way of life, very interesting: You stand upon the debateable ground betwixt philosophy and trade: You have



been obliged (and you have done it with singular success) to divide your rational from your physical powers; to separate the discordant occupations of thinking and acting from each other; your mind you devote to high philosophy, your physical powers, like those of your coach-horses, to daily practice.

“ Being a great philosopher,” has made you a little physician, and taught you, in the pride of your heart, to despise your profession and its votaries: It is the custom of those who are afflicted with the insanity of metaphysics, to regard all other studies as contemptible, all useful arts as ignoble, all practical skill as fit for men of lower cast: They are impatient of labour, proud of mystery, indifferent to knowledge, and they arrogate to themselves a crazy superiority over all other rational beings: In place of respecting the established morals and customs of the world, they are their own great examples, “*Statim sapiunt, statim sciunt omnia, neminem verentur, imitantur neminem, atque ipsi sibi sibi exempla sunt.*”

We have but to look to the temper begot by your favourite studies, on weak and proud men, to comprehend the nature of that contempt you have so confidently expressed for your profession, as if contemptuously, from one so unsound in honour and in judgment, could injure a useful and truly learned profession, in the opinion of the world.

If you have deep erudition and medical learning, you are the happiest, the most fortunate man alive; for no one has ever known the period of your life, in which your nightly watchings, your careful dissections of diseased or of sound bodies, your earnest



reading of medical authors, were accomplished. Engaged from your earlier years in the study of a mystical philosophy, in your latter years in altercations and in pamphlets, your professional talents have ripened without any visible efforts; they are not acquirements, but inspirations! you alone are so favoured, as to have your learning as others have their genius, by temperament.

The talents which a vain man is apt to despise, are often the most important to society :

“ Our needful knowledge, like our needful food,  
Unhedg'd lies open in life's common fields.”

Your confidence amazes me: but, you have the art to conceal sad defects in your professional education, by the glitter and tinsel of philosophical and literary studies. Your genius can never be sufficiently praised, for uniting, as you have done, the utmost extravagancies of taudry and vulgar wit, with the solid nonsense of metaphysics; and whatever that combination of talents can achieve, the public may expect: That you should have presumed to compare yourself with the members of the College of Physicians in moral probity, or in medical science, is really a subject of wonder. Each of them has had the courage to pursue through life, many through a long laborious life, their professional studies; and each can boast of some excellency. HOPE excels in chemistry, or that science by which we are instructed in all the process by which medicines are prepared, and in all the arts of life. HOME, with unparalleled modesty and diligence, has studied unremittingly for many years: His science is *Materia Medica*, or the know-

ledge and uses of drugs, and their application in all kind of disorders, in all constitutions and circumstances: and he teaches his department with a degree of zeal and talent hitherto unknown in our School. MONRO is acquainted, more deeply than any other, with that part of our science, without which all the others are imperfect, the structure of the human body: In this, as in all the departments of physics, RUTHERFORD excels, so that he might be placed in any chair of your University, and commence his lectures without premeditation. In what do you excel these men? Their studies are professional; their habits, manners, sentiments, and feelings, their education, and their ambition, are all professional; they seem to have no passion but to be skilful, and to be useful; they have shown themselves eager to defend their doctrines, because they imagined them useful to mankind! Your whole imagination has been devoted to metaphysics, and distracted with enmities; you have cast only contemptuous glances at your profession, in hours of idleness; and learnt so little of your science as to despise it from want of knowledge, and to depreciate it with vulgar and petulant wit: The theories of medicine you hold in contempt. You find “the dogmas of medicine STARK NONSENSE; ninety nine of a hundred facts false; more than that proportion of remedies insignificant and dangerous;” —“and, sooner than think of establishing your reputation by a medical hypothesis, you would build a palace on the Godwin sands!” The vulgar may be deceived by rhodomontade like this; to the wise it

argues, that you have neither faith nor knowledge, prudence nor goodness; your language is a treason against science, “killing in men not only the comfort of IMAGINATION, but the INDUSTRY OF TRIAL; all tending to the circumscription of man’s power, and artificial despair.”\*

It is your appointed duty, Sir, as Professor of the Practice of Physic, to be at least an Eclectic Philosopher; to make yourself master of each of the departments of Anatomy, Pathology, Chemistry, and Materia Medica; to concentrate the several rays of science upon the great questions of practice; to decide, with sober sense and judgment, the doubtful points in our profession; to join science with art, and to conduct, with a scrupulous adherence to principle, delicacy, and truth, the education of those young men who are immediately to enter on the business of the world!

From you, I fear, they will receive no very impressive lessons of prudence, or of charity. It happens, by a singular fatality, to be your appointed duty, to select all that is precious in general study,—to gather the disgregated parts and members of the science, to select what is useful, in short to winnow the corn from the chaff! But I greatly fear the process will be neither economically nor soberly conducted! The thriftless steward has turned the ox into the threshing floor, to tread and trample among the grain, and we cannot but pity the land that is to live upon the harvest.

The character of even a contemner of our profession, is too sacred to allow of an inquiry very scrupulously minute into the causes of that contempt:

\* Bacon.

I willingly allow that you feel all that you have expressed, and I think I comprehend the confused state of your mind. A physician has, in this country, no means of becoming acquainted with practice. He is never called in the commencement of a disease to trace its causes, its signs, and its progress: He is called only as a last and desperate resource, to try his last new experiments, when all hope is gone: He is called when "diseases, at first of no difficulty or danger," have, under the fostering care of those "who are not exactly physicians," brought the patient to the brink of the grave! Then these ignorant beings begin to be alarmed for their reputation, and the family for the life of an expiring parent: Then this last token of respect, or of despair, can no longer be delayed, and the physician is called!

Is this last dismal appeal made with discretion and prudence? Is it made to one who has his allegiance free; who will honourably dare to differ with those who invite him, to share with them the celebrity of this last scene? Is it made always to an independent, prudent, honourable man; one who knows the structure of the human body, and takes a deep interest in studying its changes and diseases? No; but too often to one bound by every selfish feeling, by every emotion of prudence and of gratitude; nay, by a sort of honour, bound to vindicate that practice, whatever it may be, by which "a disease, at first of no difficulty or danger," is now an occasion of alarm or despair! who is bound by a sense of charity to a distracted family, to divulge nothing which might infer, that there was a period when his art might have been of some avail.



In these scenes have you passed your life; repeating the Bleedings and Blisterings in Pleurisy! giving Digitalis in Dropsy! Hyosciamus in Cancer! Calomel in a disease of the Liver! Prescribing medicines of the last resort in cases of incurable disease! These doubtful remedies which the Surgeon, on his own authority, dare not give, which yet every shop-boy can anticipate!

And are these really consultations? Is this the office of a Physician? Involved as you have been in this routine of practice, I really do not wonder that you found "ninety-nine of a hundred facts false, and MORE, even more than that proportion of remedies of no avail." I do not wonder that you despise such occupations, and speak disrespectfully of such an art.

But while prescribing again and again the hundred medicines, of which ninety-nine are of no avail, did it never occur to you, that this is mere empiricism; that these are not the scenes in which a Physician can be of use; that the time for reasoning or judging, the time for directing or aiding the operations of nature, the time for opposing the progress of disease, was gone?

With the cunning of a metaphysician, you have represented the mere empiricisms of a doctor prescribing for his fee, as the last and best of the resources of a science which requires reflection and knowledge. Have you never recollected that there are, perhaps, some deeper sources of professional skill, which you have never known, and to which any other man, writing on the excellencies or defects of the science,



would have thought it right to direct the attention of the world?

There is one, Sir, a great and endless source of knowledge; one which you durst not, could not, speak of, on which every man, learned in his profession, rests with confidence; one for which you would do wisely to barter all your wretched philosophy. A little, a very little knowledge of the STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN BODY, whose DISEASES you pretend to cure, would inspire you with different sentiments.

I do not mean to insult you: It is not for your use alone that these letters are composed: "There are few individuals (says Stewart) whose education has been conducted in every respect with attention and judgment; almost every man of reflection is conscious, when he arrives at maturity, of many defects in his mental powers; and of many inconvenient habits, which might have been prevented in his infancy and youth. Such a consciousness is the first step towards improvement; and the person who feels it, if he is possessed of resolution and steadiness, will not scruple to begin, at advanced years, a new course of education for himself."

I confess that I wish this ingenious and modest philosopher, had observed the strong attraction which metaphysical studies have for minds too vain and light to carry any load of real and useful knowledge. "It requires courage, indeed, (says Helvetius) to continue ignorant of those useless subjects which are generally valued." But "it is NEVER TOO LATE TO THINK of improving our faculties; and much progress may be made in the art of applying them to THEIR PROPER OBJECTS."

I know not whether you are destined, at advanced years, to profit by the suggestions of your friend; but I suspect there will be found in your scheme of education, something to explain the extravagance of your life and manners. Surely, Sir, there must be something deserving serious inquiry, in the habits and professional experience of a man, who, after assuring us that "he has been admitted behind the curtain, and early initiated into the secrets of the Medical Drama," declares, that "NONE BUT THOSE WHO ARE IN THE SECRET CAN HAVE ANY NOTION how much easier it is to prescribe than to think; and, of course, how much oftener the former is done than the latter, and to how little purpose"\*.

As no man, not even a metaphysician, can divine or conceive the difficulty another feels in thinking, any more than his facility of prescribing, this is a discovery which can relate only to yourself; and I must congratulate you on a discovery accomplished by long and painful reflection, and announced, like all your discoveries of this nature, with so little reserve.

I mean not to insult you; but I must represent to you the manner in which a physician, thoroughly versed in the structure of the human body, reasons, feels, and acts. Believe me, Sir, there is a vast difference, as you have yourself almost discovered, betwixt a PRESCRIBING and a REASONING PHYSICIAN. You have explained, very unreservedly, the reasons of your contempt, and have by that betrayed a secret which you were not over wise to disclose. First, by

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\* Vide Gregory's Memorial.

denouncing medical theories and facts as universally false, you have reduced the profession to rank empiricism. Secondly, by affirming that “of a hundred boasted remedies, more than ninety-nine are insignificant and dangerous.” You have proved that empiricism to be so shallow, that it deserves to be abrogated and prescribed.

I confess, that if I am to continue to practise a profession so foully traduced, I am bound to prove that it is founded in rational science: I mean not to insult you; but I shall endeavour to prove, that it is possible for a physician to think; to show how deep an interest and sympathy that physician must feel, who is able to reason on the structure of the human frame, and the changes produced by diseases; to you the speculation may be amusing, surely it must have all the effect of novelty.

To excel as a physician; to be of the slightest use in conjecturing the causes, or calculating the issue of any inward disease, he must be consummately skilful in anatomy; not in the names, or general forms, but in the intimate structure, in the connections and sympathies, in the natural forms, and functions, and in the most frequent diseases of each internal organ.

Is a man capable of consulting about a disease, of the Valve of the Colon, which he never saw? about the state of the Liver which he never anatomised? about the Brain, whose cavities he could not distinguish\* if they were laid open before him? About

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\* Dr Rutherford came one day into the theatre of the Infirmary, and found a physician, by some strange caprice, standing over a

the female breast, while he knows no more of the structure of that gland, than anatomists do of the function of the Thymus?—about a disease of the heart, who, if the heart were dissected, and laid out before him, could NOT DISTINGUISH THE RIGHT CAVITY FROM THE LEFT; THE ARTERY THAT SUPPLIES THE LUNGS, FROM THAT WHICH CARRIES BLOOD TO THE BODY?

Is that physician qualified to enter into consultation on a disease of the Lungs, or of the membrane that covers the lungs;—on a disease of the Trachea, or of the membrane which lines the trachea, who never saw these parts? If these parts have their peculiar structure; if each has its predispositions to disease; if the restoration of free breathing, of the natural functions of the body, of the feelings of health; of voluntary motion, or the use of reason are to depend on the healthful condition of those organs being restored, it surely becomes a physician to study their natural structure, to dissect them in health and in disease; to know them, (if I may use the profane Knight's words) "as well as he that made them." Nay, he that does not know intimately the structure of the human body, is so little of a physi-

dead body, while his well-informed clerk was demonstrating to a gaping audience, how wonderfully the ventricles of the brain were enlarged! Dr Rutherford very gravely took the knife, and opened the real cavities of the brain: What the audience were admiring as a much enlarged Ventricle, was a great abscess in the brain, the cause of death, while the real cavities of the Brain remained untouched.

cian, that he will feel himself neither reasoning nor thinking, but plainly prescribing for his DAILY BREAD! Prescribing again and again, through all his career, the hundred cures, “ ninety and nine of which are as worthless as the doctrines of medicine! which are, STARK NONSENSE !”

In Melancholy, Hypochondriacism, and Insanity, in a few anomalous affections of sensation, and in many disorders of the mind, there may exist a doubt (though it never was a doubt of mine) whether those morbid affections arise from a direct physical cause. But in those more frequent diseases of particular organs, as of the organs of Circulation, Digestion, Absorption, or Sensation: In diseases of the Eye, the Brain, the Heart, and all the various organs of the body, the pains and disorder arise plainly from injured mechanism, from waste of parts, or from violence, I believe, Sir, even the vulgar would decide that he would turn out but a sorry artisan, who proposed to repair any delicate piece of mechanism, a watch, or musical instrument, who knew nothing of the temper of the materials, or the theory of its movement; or who undertook to repair a Steam-Engine, or a Mill, who knew nothing of Hydraulics, of the pressure of the atmosphere, or the mechanism of valves.

It were only surprising, if you felt enthusiasm in a profession which you had never studied, or confidence in a practical art in which you cannot reason. But shew me a man whose name has survived, or is likely to survive, his natural life, and I will be bound to prove that he has been true to his professional studies, and an enthusiast in his art. Morgagni,



and Valsalva, Lieuteaud, and Ruisch, Vesalius, and all the great Physicians, were enthusiasts in that department of our profession, of which no well educated Physician is ignorant in the present day, the structure of the human body. And Hunter, and Hewson, and Monro, have followed them, investigating, with unremitting zeal and labour, the appearances of internal disease. Dr Hunter not only made many discoveries in the anatomy and functions of the sound body, but his dissections of the gravid uterus, and his many narratives of disease, and drawings of diseased parts, in the "Medical Inquiries," have enriched our science with valuable precedents and facts. His brother Mr Hunter's dissection of the diseased Prostate, and of the disorders of the adjacent parts, excel those even of Dr Hunter in usefulness: And if ever, by any chance, the morbid anatomy of Dr Bailly should fall into your hands, you will find by what sort of investigations he became a great Physician! Perhaps you will then recollect, with some confusion, that the only skill in anatomy you have ever displayed, was in what you thought fit to call "the DISSECTION OF THE SOUL OF JUDAS JOHNSTONE, ESQ. A VILE MISCREANT," a costly dissection.\* But you have laboured on for 10 years, and so cultivated this, that it is now fit to occupy, entirely and exclu-

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\* This, which the very witty Professor calls "The Dissection of the Soul of Judas Johnstone, Esq. a vile miscreant," was a Libellous attack on the character of Dr James Hamilton, junior, for which he was amerced in a fine of £500.

sively even your great mind: Most suitable dissections these for a metaphysician.—the SOULS and GHOSTS of ANONYMOUS PAMPHLETEERS !

If it were my wish to inspire a young man with professional enthusiasm, I should expect to accomplish it in no way so happily as by teaching him to study, night and day, the structure of the human body : to witness no form of disease, without comparing the symptoms with the natural functions, the probable changes which caused disorder, with the natural and healthy condition ; to dissect and to meditate. The man thus prepared for practice, and pursuing through life those enquiries with diligence, would show himself in every professional act a thinking and a feeling man ; for reasoning on the probable changes going on within the body, has a powerful effect on the manners and feelings of a Physician ; and he will be most involved in serious thoughts and compassionate feelings, who connects every symptom with some probable change, and that change with the sufferings and probable fate of his friend. He feels his pulse, and consults his looks, and enquires about his pains or sufferings, with real sympathy, for each of these intimates some alteration within : He examines with unaffected anxiety the seat of internal disease, and is agitated by every alteration of countenance, and by every sensible change : He takes a double interest in the fate of his patient, because, along with a malady painfully affecting a fellow-creature and a friend, he is occupied in watching certain phenomena in the animal machine, certain progressive disorders in its particular organs, which, from a long stu-

dy of their structure, he foresees are likely to happen, and the signs of those changes are the presages of life or death. This train of study, this manner of performing his duty, at once requires and begets a reflecting and sympathizing temper, and a philosophical turn of mind.

A TRADING PHYSICIAN would be ruined by thinking: The hours fly, and he is in haste to prescribe: You would think, as his chariot drives furiously along, that he were chacing death before him out at every avenue of the city: He is simply overtaking time, coursing through practice, hastening to meet those associates who shoulder him onwards through the busy gainful scene, where

“ All rush rapacious, friends o’er trodden friends,  
O’er just, o’er sacred, all forbidden ground,  
To snatch the golden showers.”

You know not, perhaps, what is a TRADING PHYSICIAN; nor in what terms such a being is described by moral writers: “Sickness and anguish are his harvest; he rejoices to hear that they have fallen upon any of his acquaintance; he looks blank and disconsolate when all men are at their ease; the fantastic valetudinarian is his particular prey; he listens to his frivolous tale of symptoms with inflexible gravity; he pretends to be most wise when he is most ignorant: No matter whether he understands any thing of the disease; there is one thing in which his visit must inevitably terminate, a prescription!”

This is the express counterpart of a scientific physician, or a good man: This is the being whose oc-

cupation is insured by politic connections, and whose trade is visits; the vacant hurry of whose mind is discharged in common-place questions, and trivial directions; and who is reminded that he must think, or seem to think, only by recollecting that he must prescribe!

Is it any way a serious consultation, can it mean any thing but to gratify the relations of a dying man, that a prescribing physician, connected with surgeons, is called by them in the last stage of a dropsy, to prescribe, first, Cream of tartar, then Calomel, then Foxglove? “The first row of the rubric will show the rest.”—Why, this is a course of prescription which any shop-boy could anticipate: These are the remedies, or the diseases, rather, in which, in a proportion of more than ninety-nine of a hundred cases, you have found yourself repeating despicable experiments, till you were ashamed of your insignificant condition, and despised the science.

Of your “ninety and nine remedies” you have spoken justly: But in those real and important consultations, when the state of the system, the balance of the functions, the operation and the condition of the several organs and internal parts, are to be discussed, and when real science is required; have you any thing of that spirit of foresight and conjecture concerning the internal changes, which only real science, and long and deep meditation on the structure and disorders of the human frame, can bestow? Have you that deep sympathy, that sober and reflecting state of mind, which the study of causes must beget? Have you that silent humiliation in the presence of misery,

which so well becomes one, who feels that he cannot alleviate the pangs, nor avert the changes, of the scene before him ; while the afflicted look up to him for help, as to an inspired and superior being ? You have, to use the language of your father, “ many opportunities of seeing people, once the gay and the happy, sunk in deep retired distress ; sometimes devoted to a painful and lingering death, and sometimes struggling with the tortures of a distracted mind ! ” Have those scenes made that impression on your spirits, which this language of your father is of itself calculated to inspire ? No,—but you are wonderous facetious.

Reflect, Sir, how ill this humour accords with the scenes in which you are every hour engaged ! how ill it suits your profession, in place of cheerful and inspiring looks, to insult the languid and despairing with obstreperous mirth ; or to speak with so much levity of that art which administers to the afflicted.

“ To weed this wormwood from your fruitful brain,  
I'll have you put into an Hospital,  
You shall this twelvemonth's term, from day to day,  
Visit the speechless sick, and still converse  
With groaning wretches ; and your task shall be,  
With all the fierce endeavour of your wit,  
To enforce the pained impotent to smile.”

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“ To move wild laughter in the throat of death ?  
It cannot be ; it is impossible :  
MIRTH CANNOT MOVE A SOUL IN AGONY.”

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## LETTER XIV.

Dr Gregory misconceives the uses of Classical Learning, and the influences of Philosophy, which are, to temper the Passions, correct the Conduct, and refine the Perceptions and the Taste.

Dr Gregory misconceives the Duties of a Professor; mistakes familiarity for liberality, indelicacy for candour, and ribaldry for dignity. His railing at the character of his Predecessors, and at the disputes of Philosophers, Physicians, and Improvers of our Science, referred to its true cause.

The difference betwixt the Contentions of Philosophers, and the Quarrels of Trade, explained; and Dr Gregory referred to his own Class, viz. of these Literary Gentlemen who are so liberal as to distribute their most interesting publications GRATIS — Dr Gregory, in place of imitating his illustrious predecessors, the Founders of the School of Medicine, reviles their doctrines, absolves himself from the tedious duties of a Professor; resolves never to play the fool like Dr Cullen, casting out Tubs to amuse the Whale! but to stick to that stile of Writing, and those ways of cultivating Practice, in which he stands unrivalled.

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“BEING a great Philosopher,” has deprived you of all the advantages of your reputed learning, and respectable birth. If ever classical studies could prove a dishonour, it must be to one visibly afflicted with all the pedantry, without any of the uses, of learning; who having been forced to read the classical authors of antiquity, and having

had the happiness to live with the most celebrated men of this city, has imbibed not the slightest tincture of elegance, taste, or urbanity; who, abandoning the pursuit of an honourable profession, one fit to display the genius, and to prove the virtues of a good and great man, has entered into mean and angry quarrels, and open warfare, with physicians and surgeons, with individuals and colleges; and engaged in sordid intrigues with copartners of men not famed for liberality or learning: In whose defamatory and prolix quartos there is not to be found one professional question debated with dignity, nor one sentence that denotes a man of humane and polished manners.

A classical education enlarges the mind, and prepares it for professional studies, and leads to those refinements and delicacies of thought and conduct, which your father describes as essential to the character of a physician. Polished language, delicate manners, a fastidious taste, and solitary studies, an entire indifference to vulgar abuse, or vulgar praise, characterise the man devoted to learning. A classical education is found to exalt the generous affections, and, by examples of prudence, patience, and self-command, teaches at once a just contempt for the petty vexations of the world, and enthusiasm in behalf of humanity and of science; it purifies the mind from low pursuits.

Is it not singular, Sir, that your habits should be as opposite to those of the society of this city, as your taste or talents from the literature you affect. The Smiths, and Humes, the Robertsons, and Stew-

arts, the Tytlers, and Mackenzies; our profound philosophers, as well as our elegant writers, have been men of unassuming manners, simple, gentle, and amiable. You alone, Sir, born in this rank of society, have been seized with the unhappy madness, of indicating talents by extravagance, and virtue by rudeness, and of expressing the little that you do know of charity and humanity, in language of the lowest burlesque.—Learning was never till now known to produce hurry, and bustle, and impetuosity of manner, intemperance of language, nor any thing but retired conduct and dignified sentiments! But you have all the while, I believe, been labouring under a great deception, mistaking a little skill in the Latin Language, for the acmè of human accomplishments; while it is nothing but the means of attaining knowledge, the vehicle of the *literæ humaniores*, the means by which you might have become polite and learned.

Often we see those the most fervently devoted to the duties of their profession, occupying themselves, during their hours of retirement, in some pleasing study, becoming men of science; in the studies of philology, poetry, ancient learning, or the fine arts. It is soothing to be thus occupied in hours of relaxation, and others find such a man more gentle and amiable. By being possessed of taste and sensibility, he becomes more valuable as a companion and friend; his studies occupy only those hours which so often run to waste, and prove a happy and pleasing resource in the wane of life, when necessity no longer impels him to labour, and his great and active duties to society draw near a close.

But you have invented for yourself unusual occupations, and framed your mind to no sympathising modes: Your public occupation is avowedly calumny, which you boast of: You walk about in moody bitterness, and speak in hurried solitary ravings: Your consultations are devolved to another, while your nights are passed in composing scurrilities, and your days in repeating the wit of those quartos, and enquiring about their success.

At what period have you enjoyed that pleasing serenity of mind, which flows from real philosophy, and liberal studies, and from which a Physician returns to his professional labours with a clear and unclouded mind? In your bosom no placid nor gentle thoughts are ever indulged, but a tumult of resentments, a whirlwind of passions, or a tormenting stillness, which yet admits no sober professional reflections, no interest in the distresses, nor reasoning on the disorders of your patients: It is not in nature, that you can turn from such heroic scenes of contention to the insipid duties of ordinary life.

“ You have taught (you tell us) in this University the theory and practice of physic four and thirty years !” But, your ambition of being a GREAT PHILOSOPHER, has made you a LITTLE PROFESSOR, as well as a little physician; and much I fear, your being from your earliest youth admitted BEHIND THE CURTAIN, and let into the secret of the MEDICAL DRAMA,” has taught you to play a part congenial rather with your interests, or what you weakly imagine such, than with the great and sacred duties to which you were destined.



A teacher of science, an instructor of rash, impetuous youth, of those unused with restraint, and just entering on the stage of life, has occasion for all his prudence. It is a delicate and sacred charge. His duties are to repress levity, to enforce diligence, and to inculcate morals, while he instructs his pupils in science: To set before them an example of unremitting labour, in all the essential parts of study; and of openness, candour, and integrity, in all his sentiments and conduct: To teach them to alleviate pain and suffering by sympathy, and want by charity; to improve their profession by continual diligence, and to honour it by the practice of every virtue.

No science is more difficult than that of communicating science; teaching is itself a study; and science, especially when connected with a practical art, and with moral duties, should be taught in a grave and persuasive manner: A sound understanding is required for such an office, and a generous temper, and sedate and manly conduct. True, a professor can never win the confidence of youth, otherwise than by candid open manners, and, by affecting gravity, may incur contempt: But it is equally true, that he will not for one hour maintain their good opinion, who, wanting a truly liberal spirit, only affects what he ought to feel, mistakes familiarity for liberality, indelicacy for candour, and blends with his public admonitions, misplaced wit, and tales offensive to modesty, which repetition will teach even the most ignorant to despise, and which not even the most ignorant and uneducated can long approve.



“——Should I describe a teacher,  
 I would express him simple, grave, sincere,  
 In doctrine uncorrupt, in language plain,  
 And plain in manners, decent, solemn, chaste,  
 And natural in gesture; much impressed  
 Himself, as conscious of his awful charge.”

The first of all talents, is to form a just estimate of our duties, and to prepare for acting a conspicuous and honourable, part, by setting up some model of imaginary, or real perfection, as the object of our imitation: “But to support and finish off, if I may say so, the conduct and conversation of a whole life, to any resemblance of this ideal perfection, is surely most difficult.”\*

“In the discharge of thy place (says Bacon) set before thee the best examples; for imitation is a globe of precepts: and, after a time, set before thee thine own example, and examine theyself strictly.”

What conceptions you have formed of those sacred duties; what kind of illustrations you have chiefly delighted to use in teaching; what aspect the whole medical science must have assumed in your more familiar addresses from the academic chair, it is now easy for the world to judge by those quartos, in which you have delivered so unreservedly your speculations on trade and science! and in which you have divulged opinions which it was your duty secretly to resist, and which it was treason, if you did indulge them, to REVEAL.

I cannot accuse myself of want of zeal or diligence in my early studies, yet I never became your pupil.

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\* Adam Smith, vol. 2. p. 152.

There was something in your manner very little according with the tone of earnest or deliberate inquiry, or fit to serve as a basis for progressive studies, in a deep and difficult science; neither seriousness nor system; neither that composed and dignified manner of teaching which I could find persuasive and useful, nor that clear and philosophical train of investigation, that masterly review of past opinions, that clear recapitulation of ascertained facts, which might assist me in improving my mind. From my companions I heard of no grave impressive discourses on diseases and their remedies; but in their place, long and idle disquisitions, extending through days and weeks of suspended interest! Loquacious pedantry: with stories of Grandmothers and Aunts, Priests and Professors, Mathematicians and Metaphysicians of your long illustrious line! Discussions of Hypochondriacal feelings, omens, dreams, and prophecies; and tales, and jests, such as now adorn, aye, the very tales that do adorn these everlasting quartos. These tales, now published in a more authentic way, prove to me that I was not misinformed: You “shamed your noble office,” “and played your brilliant parts before their eyes, while they were hungry for the bread of life.” \*

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\* Whoever desires to see a dissertation on Aunts, Grandmothers, Uncles, &c. to trace from unquestionable authority the great Gregorian line, and to know the sources of those extraordinary talents so often boasted by the PRESENT ILLUSTRIOUS POSSESSOR, will find all that he could desire in the second Scurrilous Quarto.

“ ——— in te omnis domus inclinata recumbit,”

It was verily early suspected that you were no enthusiast in science; that if you should ever think of building your fame on a work of medical reasoning, or medical observation, you would really be building, or attempting to build, a magnificent dwelling on the Godwin Sands.

“ Few Metaphysicians, perhaps, are to be found (says Stewart) who are not DEFICIENT in the POWER OF OBSERVATION; for, although a taste for such abstract studies is far from being common, it is more apt than any other, when it has once been formed, to take an exclusive hold of the mind, and to shut up the other sources of intellectual improvement.”

This is indeed unfortunate; for “ MEDICAL OBSERVATIONS AND MEDICAL REASONING” are, I apprehend, inseparable from the function of a physician. Medical reasoning and Medical observation, are the peculiar and appointed duties of a CLINICAL PROFESSOR. You had assumed that duty, and had not yet disclaimed the faculties of reasoning, observing, and speculating: In one Course of Clinical Lectures I did become your pupil, and submitted to hear a few, and (though my circumstances enforced diligence) a very few of your “ observations and reasonings” on the diseases of the poor. They were indeed very unsympathizing comments on the sufferings of expiring patients, and little fit to be recorded as lessons of prudence to young men.

The impressions I received, corresponded but too well with the reports of my fellow-students: You trusted too implicitly to the youth and inexperience of those who heard you, to their levity and want of

discernment; and gave way, in the evenings of those days in which you had been registering reports of the unexpected mortifying death of patients, to a spirit of wild unrestrained mirth.\* You vindicated them as you do now your indifference to such scenes, by appealing to the hardened and callous temper of others; and looked at the very work of your own hands, without dismay, saying, “have we not seen Pharsalia?” and you said sometimes more and sometimes worse than this: As for example, when you taught your pupils, that it was but for NOVICES to MOURN AND LAMENT!

What a mind must he have, who can imagine, that even a novice but pretends to lament, when, from an error in his own practice, the patient dies? Your clinical lectures, Sir, like your quartos, brought to my mind no image but of one deprived of all modesty and feeling; of one resolved to be a wit at the expence of every decency, and practising to become an orator like Demosthenes, with his mouth filled with pebbles, declaiming on the sea-shore.

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\* “To my certain knowledge, several of these journals, I mean especially of unfortunate cases, have been printed and published, adorned and illustrated, by very ample and inveterate commentaries; in which the editors have been pleased to revile the Professors in the bitterest terms of contempt and reproach. I myself have had the honour of being thus reviled in print, for my practice in the clinical wards!”

*Gregory's Memorial.*

This gentleman seems to have been very much offended with the freedom these pamphleteers used; and he may be inclined to say to me, too, “what is your business with my dead men;” “quid tibi cum meis mortuis.” Sir, your dead men are killed for the public instruction!

Of all the qualities which a teacher should cultivate in a youthful mind, the first and most important, is a high and generous admiration of departed merit; to decry works of genius, and defame the dead, is the surest mark of an ignoble mind.

What have you ever done to inspire that ardour which is necessary to support diligence, and carry a young man through the study of the many sciences which contribute to medical skill? What to inspire them with reverence for their instructors, or respect for

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Every neglect of public duty, every indelicacy or indecency, even the rudest and most ferocious indifference to the ill consequences of his practice, are vindicated in the writings of this Gentleman by an appeal to the habits and sentiments of the unfortunate Dr Cullen.—In the following precious anecdote he ridicules the trembling anxieties of the NOVICE, who WONDERS and LAMENTS for THE DEATH OF A PATIENT! or PRETENDS! to WONDER and LAMENT; and dictates the true sentiment suitable to the occasion, and the words which the veteran Cullen, and the intrepid Gregory, would use in the midst of such a scene.

“What Dr Monro may say to it, I know not; probably little or nothing. But I know well what Dr Cullen would have said, if it had happened to him; at least, what he used to say when things went wrong; as, for instance, when a MEDICINE CAME UP THAT SHOULD HAVE GONE DOWN! or a patient GREW WORSE when he should HAVE RECOVERED! and when NOVICES! WONDERED and LAMENTED or PRETENDED TO WONDER! AND LAMENT ON SUCH OCCASIONS! Dr Cullen, firm as Cato, contented himself with saying, “Have we not seen Pharsalia?” *Gregory’s Memorial*, p. 19. This was on the dissection of a patient, on whom, by Dr Monro’s advice, an operation had been performed which proved *fatal*! I believe that neither NOVICE nor VETERAN will be apt to forget the new and old morals of the Edinburgh School.



yourself and your sacred function? Nothing! worse than nothing! You told them not less than you have told the public at large, more I fear than can be said with truth, or than should be said, though true. You flatly told them, that all which they might admire in their new profession, was unworthy of your ambition: and all that had been praised, was an object of scorn! That by your birth, you had been early admitted behind the scenes, and initiated in the cunning of the medical drama! "That its theories and its facts, its teaching and its practice, exhibited a scene so disingenuous, that you could not conceal your contempt of it; that you would no more think of establishing your fame, by the cultivation of such a science, than of building a gorgeous Palace on the Godwin sands!" This you have proclaimed, not in the precipitation and thoughtlessness of oral discourse, but in books published with cruel deliberation; and, to vindicate your own licentious, unindustrious life, have dared to traduce this School, and its doctrines, and the sacred characters of its founders.

"There must be a TUB TO AMUSE THE WHALE," said Dr Cullen to my father, who had expressed his concern, at seeing so many of our students mis-spend their time and labour in that manner, and had even taken the liberty of a friend and a colleague, to remonstrate a little with him, on some of his own most favourite speculations, neither the truth nor the usefulness of which my father could perceive. DR CULLEN'S ANSWER WAS THAT OF A MAN OF GENIUS, WHO THOROUGHLY UNDERSTOOD HIS OWN PROFES-

SION, AND THE SITUATION IN WHICH HE WAS PLACED. It conveyed more knowledge of physic and of human nature, than I have been able to find in a great and very popular work on the theory of physic, which has been more highly extolled than any other that has been published in my time; which seems to have been composed and published in sober earnest." \*

To all men of science it is mortifying and discouraging to see this; to see, within a few short years of his death, that man whose liberalities and charities were long felt in this city, quite forgotten! That physician, whose doctrines have almost created this school, (for he, after Monro the father, was its second founder) mentioned with contempt in his own university, and from the very chair he filled with so much honour!—"A TUB TO AMUSE THE WHALE!" Could Cullen indeed say this? Cullen, the proud and jealous author of a doctrine which had enslaved the medical world, could he declare that doctrine to be a cheat? It is not to be believed; a regard for consistency and decency, a regard for the sacred office he professed, a regard for his own lasting reputation, which stood on this sole point, respect for his predecessors, and justice and honour towards those who were to succeed him in his office, must have restrained him, even in the presence of a friend; vanity must have restrained him, if no better sentiment dwelt in his mind. \*

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\* Mr Bell's Reply to Dr Gregory's first Scurrilous Memorial, page 52.

That effrontery, striving with shame, should produce an apology like this! a precedent of avowed contempt for medical theory, from a school famed for theories, and that out of the mouth of Cullen, the most inspired of all the dreamers of dreams! That You, his Successor, Professor of the theory and of the practice of physic for nearly 40 years, should deliberately and daringly affirm, that "THE FACTS OF MEDICINE ARE NINETY-NINE OF A HUNDRED FALSE!"—"ITS THEORIES STARK NONSENSE." That "MEDICAL REASONING, and MEDICAL OBSERVATION," are objects of supreme contempt: That the first duty of a Professor is to amuse the students, and play the hypocrite! That the testamentary instructions of Cullen were always to throw out A TUB TO AMUSE THE WHALE! and another! and another! and another! and that you alone have the virtue to abhor these arts, and to disclose them!

Thus have you, with a kind of metaphysical instinct, contrived to depreciate science, and absolve yourself at once from all the arduous duties of your station; from the tedium of medical reasoning, and the toils of medical observation, and from those restraints which sit so heavy on an exalted genius. The daily labours of medical PRESCRIPTION or CONSULTATION, may, you have proved experimentally, be performed by proxy; and here custom not being supported by precedent, you are your own great example. But the manner in which you have acquitted yourself of your PUBLIC FUNCTIONS, required a vindication; and you have conducted your comments on the genius of our university, and the works of

your predecessors, with singular address. By praising Cullen for low cunning, and your father for his share of knowledge and skill in the medical drama, you have extolled those excellencies only in which you must take precedence of all men of learning.

From conduct like your's, we are naturally inclined to look back to past times; when you were called at little more than twenty years of age, and by virtue of hereditary right, to a chair in this University: Strong as your title might be, was there nothing to strike you with awe? One great man † was dead, whose fame was not “founded on the sands;” and you, untried, and almost untaught, were called to fill his place!

You were raised to the most enviable, the most honourable station in the first university in the world; and though involved in metaphysical studies, were expected to supply, with ingenious theories and sound doctrines, and dignified conduct, his almost irreparable loss. A constellation of men, blessed with most conspicuous talents, had raised the fame of our university above all the schools in Europe, and left it

\* “It was the theory on those subjects taught by Dr Cullen. It was one of his tubs to amuse the whale: and after it had served its purpose for some time, and was a little shartered in the service, he very wisely withdrew it, and THREW OUT ANOTHER! AND ANOTHER! so as to keep the WHALE EFFECTUALLY AMUSED, and always PLAYING ABOUT HIM!”

*Dr Gregory's Memorial*, p. 188.

† Dr Cullen.

high and distinguished in this, the only land of science, to cultivate the arts most interesting to mankind. Was there nothing to gratify your vanity, or fill your mind; to make you indifferent to petty quarrels, unbecoming your station, and unsuited to your functions? Here was the ground on which true ambition would have made its stand.

For the discoveries of men I claim no perfection; but their ardour and diligence in improving science, I ever shall respect; and this was an æra in ours. The disputes of that period were about the functions of the Brain, the irritability of Muscles, the structure of the Nerves, the action of the Absorbent Vessels, the Constitution and the Living Properties of the Blood, the Nature of Excitement and Debility, the influence of Spasm upon the Extreme Vessels, and concerning the right administration of Opium, and Wine, and Antimony, and Bleeding in Fevers and other diseases.

Sir, these are something to all philosophers, and every thing to physicians; and on the issue of those debates hung the lives of thousands! Then the university was agitated with the great Brunonian sensism; and the teachers and the rivals of the school, the Browns and the Hunters, the Cullens and Monros, had that charm in their inventions which excited universal enthusiasm: Then medical science was matter of deep interest; the pupils defended their opinions with passionate ardour, and carried to all parts of the world a zeal and admiration for their teachers, and a pleasing remembrance of their companions and of their oppo-



nents. This is too often all that remains of departed genius,

“The melancholy ghosts of dead renown,  
Whispering faint echoes of the world’s applause.”

“But the arts and sciences, like some plants, require a fresh soil; and, however rich the land may be, and however you may recruit it by art or care, it will never, when once exhausted, produce any thing that is perfect or finished in its kind.” \*

Now, the tumults of debate have subsided, the war of opinions has ceased, and the attention of the world is called to higher interests and more subtile arts! The cabals of an Hospital require the talents of our Professor of Practice; and the rights of Hospital Clerks, and growing Apprentice-Surgeons, are his peculiar care; persecution of private character perturbs our city, and debates about policy, copartnery, and trade. But in the university all is silent; science sleeps sound; the theories of past times, the discoveries of Cullen and Brown, are still and cold as their authors; Schisms and contentions have ceased, the flag is struck: The master of all other sciences† has come to declare to us, how vain all our occupations are: “That our theories are nonsense,” and “our facts lies;” that “observation

\* Hume on the Rise of Arts and Sciences.

† “Having a LITTLE NOTION OF SOME OTHER SCIENCES,” is the modest disguise in which the pride of a Metaphysician clothes his perfect self-approbation.

is idleness," and "medical reasoning a mere deceit;" that our sympathies are a mere pretence; that reputation is a name written in the sands,—a monument raised beyond the landmarks, to be washed away with the returning tide

You have made the press, which should be a means of instruction for youth, for announcing discoveries and promoting science, a vehicle for defamation and scandal: your most natural duties you have represented as unworthy of your ambition; even your consultations you have devolved to others: your faith and allegiance to the University you have violated, and have persecuted your colleagues, till they have been forced to appeal to "the King to right, the law to help them."

Where are the censors of this University? Is there no inquisition to question insolence and misrule? How is the Principal, or head of our School, occupied amidst such a scene?—If public processions can bespeak a public grief, that which followed ROBERTSON to the grave should be long remembered,—the most dignified and liberal man that ever perhaps presided over a learned body.\* Had he survived but a few years, he would have quelled insolence like yours, nor suffered your most illiberal quarrels to disturb our University, your trading alliances, your fol-

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\* I shall choose a time, when my interests or prejudices may be less suspected than now they might be, to express more fully my opinion of this very extraordinary system of medical education, and to give a sketch of this celebrated ruin.

ly, nor your wit, to degrade the seat of learning hitherto the pride of our country.

When a man has arrived at that period of his life which you so often boast of, and sometimes lament,† without having fulfilled the expectations of the world, or justified the conspicuous rank that birth or accident may have placed him in, fear and doubt assail him, and envy takes place of emulation. I never read that wretched apology for your unindustrious life, without pity; an apology full of low invidious art, in language suited to your base purpose.

“ I have taught (you say) the theory and the practice of physic in the University of Edinburgh for four and thirty years, without once throwing out a TUB TO AMUSE THE WHALE ! I never thought I had ingenuity enough to make such a tub, or dexterity enough to manage any of the numberless ready made tubs which were floating around me ! I observed, to my great comfort, that I had no OCCASION to take that TROUBLE ! as the WHALE has always found some tub to amuse itself withal, and has never yet shewn the smallest inclination, either to SWALLOW or to OVERSET ME ! and MY LITTLE BARK : as I never did, nor ever intend to do IT any harm, I am not in the least afraid of the WHALE ! ”

Sir, if your professorship were a dukedom, I should not envy you : What is your little bark ? What, for Godsake, do you call your LITTLE BARK ? Your flotilla of predatory quartos, cruising against the repu-

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† The wrong side of fifty, &c. &c.

tation of your rivals, we do know; if ever you have secretly embarked, it must have been, that, after exciting a mutiny on board, you have gone on a pirating voyage with the worst of the crew, likely as the CAPTAIN OF SUCH A GANG, to expiate your adventure gibbeted on the "GODWIN SANDS."

Sir, this is the truth: You have found too late how little metaphysics will improve our science; that other works are required to establish a reputation, than those in which you have been engaged: Hence, every recollection is painful, every tribute to departed genius a reproach; envious and despairing thoughts torment you, and you feel that punishment which is so admirably expressed in the language which you affect to admire.

"Magne Pater divum, sævos punire tyrannos,  
Haud alio ratione velis, cum dira libido  
Moverit ingenium, *ferventi tincta veneno*,  
VIRTUTEM VIDEANT, INTABEScantQUE RELICTA."

lines so beautifully translated by our Milton:

"And felt how awful goodness is, and saw  
Virtue in her own shape, how lovely saw,  
And pined his loss."

You disdain to throw out, like your predecessors, a tub to amuse the whale! Oh precious hypocrisy! There is no living being that would have been so distracted as you with vanity, so drunk with applause, had you been able to inspire the slightest portion of that enthusiasm, which their doctrines inspired; And is it for this you have traduced the name of Cullen, and joined those contemptuous epithets with his ingenious theory, "A TUB TO AMUSE

THE WHALE? Is it as a foil to your transcendent genius, to your mild and unresisting spirit, that you have represented, with ridicule, the debates of learned physicians? This is but the resource of low minds,

“ They draw a nourishment  
Out of defamings, grow upon disgraces,  
And when they see a virtue fortified  
Strong above the battery of their tongues,  
Oh how they cast to sink it, and,  
(Soul seek with poison) STRIKE THE MONUMENTS  
WHERE NOBLE NAMES LIE SLEEPING.”

BEN JOHNSON.



## LETTER XV.

ON MEDICAL CHARACTER, Professional Education, the Costume, the Conduct, and the Moral Habits, of a Physician.

Of the several gradations of professional men. The character of a Family-Attendant : The character of Partner : The character of a Physician : Their reciprocal relations and duties to each other represented, and the needful distinction of duties, and separation of interests, to maintain even a seeming purity and simplicity of practice.

The loss of INDEPENDENCE demonstrated to be the greatest of all incapacities in a Physician ; a propensity to strife and contention next ; and, lastly, that total absence of delicacy and of principle, which inclines him to league himself visibly with running Cepartneries of Surgeons, and to delegate his most important duties, those which perhaps he alone is supposed capable of performing, to younger and less skilful Physicians.

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INCREDULOUS of all the efficacy of our art, you became naturally careless of all those decencies by which it might yet be respected as a profession at least aiming at usefulness, and void of offence. I have ever pitied the man, whether Professor, Priest, or Physician, who lives in perpetual contention, betwixt the levity of his mind, and the

solemnities of his office; betwixt natural incredulity and those gloomy signs of faith which he may think it convenient to exhibit to the world; and therefore I much approve your sincerity. When the study of a mystical philosophy begat in your mind a contempt of a practical science, in which you had never been an enthusiast; when a peculiar train of ideas, new connections, and more ambitious views, taught you to mock at all the usual courtesies and proprieties of life, and make open war on the reputation and interests of your brethren,—why not bravely proclaim the truth, throw off all restraint, declare your incredulity, and indulge your malice?

By such open proclamations, by declaring your ill opinion of our profession, and publishing your true character of yourself, you left no accusation any way dangerous to your peace: Of hypocrisy you could not be accused; your conduct was consistent, your honour unquestionable; and you had but one thing to apprehend, that your success in calumny might seduce others to try their fortune; that your conduct might become a precedent for less distinguished members of our profession, and take a stamp of authority from your high station. But on this point you may set your heart at ease, every moment you live will lessen that bad influence: Your life is more likely to become a warning than an example; and I have promised to make it “a negative lesson of every imaginable virtue.

There are difficulties in the facts you represent in your censorian and monitory Letter, fit to stagger the most credulous and unthinking. It were

strange, indeed, if, in the best state of society, a profession were permitted to exist, whose members were destitute at once of every moral feeling; of humanity towards the poor, of honour towards each other, or faith or probity towards mankind! a profession, whose younger members, contrary to all the passions natural to early life, were indifferent to professional excellence; and whose elder and seemingly respectable members, assembled themselves in colleges and corporate bodies, not to fulfil their duties, and to resolve how their talents might be made most useful to the public, but to invent low, gainful, and selfish schemes! Strange to me, if this were exactly the profession in which I had been educated, in the midst of which I had lived, without discovering this shocking depravity of morals;—the profession which I had been accustomed to look up to as the most respectable and useful.

But your fervent imagination perpetually transports you to some unreal scene, or makes you at least forget the actors: Your natural connections and common intercourse, has made such things credible to you; nay, so familiar, that the confusion of your intellect has made you blunder out, as accusations against those whom you hate, the very politics and conduct for which you secretly admire your best friends.

For a while we have been subject to your arts and intrigues. “All mens reputations have lain as in a mass before you, to be fashioned into what shape you please;” and you have gone forward boldly, as if our profession were destitute of principles, or

its members of feeling ! as if there were no prejudices opposed to your new scheme of life, no prepossessions in favour of that individuality of character, sacred to every man, because acquired by his own industry and talents ; no common consent in those mutual and relative duties by which, as professors of one common art, we are bound to each other ; as if there were no predilection in favour of that learning, modesty, and candour, which should distinguish a physician ;—as if our profession alone were a lawless horde !

If there be laws or feelings to regulate our conduct, or any acknowledged character peculiar to a physician, it is now time that it were publicly explained : You have attempted innovations in which it would be melancholy if you should succeed, and, by denying every virtue and accomplishment to the members of a useful profession, you have drawn on a public inquiry : I know no subject of equal importance : Nor peace, nor war, domestic treason, foreign levy, nothing can equal the interest—the public should have in the morals of a profession like ours.

What can be more deeply interesting to the master of a family, than the morals of his medical friend ; his companion, to whom he confides his most secret thoughts ; whose office admits him to the unreserved conversations, the most private recess of his house ; on whom his hopes rest in the most dismal and anxious moments of his life, when he is counting every moment as if it were the last of his happy prospects in the world.

Indeed, Sir, these are not subjects for levity: I have accused you, and shall now seriously repeat that accusation of deep injustice to your profession: I shall discuss these subjects without fear or favour; but I shall put a guard upon my warm temper, a better guard than my own experience could afford, and, under that correction, to which my private thought shall always be submitted, I hope to acquit myself as a man of probity and honour should do, and perform my remaining duty with no affected wit, nor hypocritical solemnity; nor shall I venture to express the indignation I must feel, till it be warranted by a judgment superior to my own.

The principles by which your conduct shall be tried are your father's, and I shall endeavour to trace the natural temper of our profession to our daily duties; the constitution and order of its several subordinate offices, to those principles of rectitude and honour, which must always actuate the majority of well educated men: The peculiar and high character of a physician, the qualities of his mind, and even the manner of his life and conversation, I am sure, may be explained by the peculiar nature of his offices.

These doctrines make up the sum of that constitution to which I mean to appeal; and in contrasting your conduct with the precepts of your father, I appeal to a code of laws neither antiquated, nor illiberal; neither written in the sourness of pedantry, nor the extravagance of glaring innovation; but in a simple and unaffected strain of persuasion, which has inspired many with the desire of being what your



father describes, and which should carry your thoughts back into your own mind.

That laws, which our nature, and all our better feelings dictate, and which every moral principle enjoins, should have been so often violated, must ever be matter regret. The scenes which have been acted in this city may well stagger the belief of the public in the virtues and learning of our tribe; and the works of which you are the author, give a singular specimen of the violence with which points of interest will be debated, and of the indecent levity with which the sufferings of human nature will be treated, by those under the dominion of jealous passions, and the sad delusion of being celebrated for wit,

But, you have stood alone in this scene: Never, even to this hour, slandered in your reputation, nor irritated by opposition or reproach, you have yet continued to traduce the most harmless, and the most able of our professors; to insult the worthiest characters in this city, and torture the public feelings. You have had leave to state untruths, to outrage modesty and decency, to calumniate unrebuked, to announce “singular deviations from the usual habits of your profession,” and to shape out for yourself a trade really disgraceful to the College with which you are connected! to thrive by cabals in a public hospital, and to be visibly entangled in connections discreditable to your profession.

The ill effects of your way of life are not limited to present injuries, or the present times; they lead to a defective plan of education, and ungenerous principles and modes of practice: When the right objects of ambition are changed, and emulation

extinguished ; when it comes to pass, (as of late it has in this city, where a consciousness of the fact is impressed on every mind,) that no excellence in science can lead a man on to fortune so effectually as base connections, and the arts of trade !—surely it will require more than usual virtue to withstand the temptation. From the moment in which a man's fate and fortune in life is promoted by cunning and intrigue ; when he is also aware, that to acquire a reputation for science, is but to expose himself a conspicuous mark for calumny to shoot at, diligence and emulation must cease. If there are, in the present state of our profession, marks of such degenerate and destructive politics, it is full time to appeal to the acknowledged principles of our order, or to such as analogy and reason will afford.

It is no way surprising that the rewards of our profession are unequally distributed ; that professional learning cannot alone beget confidence, nor ensure the rewards due to skill. Our profession is a commerce of affection, betwixt those who are subdued by suffering and sickness, and those whose office it is to alleviate pain and ward off danger. In hours of sickness and langour, every man is more susceptible ; the coarsest nature is open to the impressions of tenderness ; and it is easy to trace the undistinguishing affection of a patient for his physician, to the best feelings of the heart. He finds often a palliation of ignorance in the real, or seeming goodness of his medical friend ; and is at pains to cherish a sort of confidence, even in one whom he knows to be no way distinguished by talents or erudition. He is conscious, that the friendship and

confidence he shows for his family attendant should inspire attachment and regard, and ensure every sacrifice of professional etiquette, or of personal vanity, when any thing difficult or dangerous in his situation might seem to require additional help.

It becomes very interesting to retrace the reciprocal duties and feelings of the patient and his medical friends; and, when we reflect on the state of mind, natural to the master and head of a family, we shall perceive how the profession spontaneously resolves itself into its several departments, with distinct and peculiar duties. Those dependencies and connections are founded on feelings, all of which are natural, some perhaps delusive; yet even those we cannot but approve, as proceeding from affectionate and grateful feelings.

It is altogether essential to the health and preservation of a family, and especially conducive to the ease of mind of the parents, that there should be some acknowledged and confidential medical person, who lives with them on terms of familiarity and friendship. The slightest disorder leads sometimes to the most disastrous consequences, and it requires more than a parent's skill to distinguish such danger, and somewhat less than a parent's anxiety to treat such slight disorder with prudence. The father of a family, then, is conscious that it is not every indisposition that requires the formal advice of a physician, but that the slightest requires the attention of some watchful, prudent, and skilful friend. He is conscious that this person, to whom, through a train of accidents, perhaps of eager solicitation, he has been in-

duced to trust the general care of his family, stands not very high in point of reputation; but what he requires is rather sense and goodness; and he says within himself, "Chance has directed me to one, whose talents are respectable, whose manners and sentiments I approve, and whose long and valuable services deserve my confidence and my utmost gratitude. He has been my companion in sickness, and has witnessed with me the death of parents, and the loss of children. A thousand painful feelings have been alleviated by his friendship: It has dissipated the terrors of imaginary and of real dangers: With his assurance of safety I have laid down my head in peace, and risen to the labours of the day with a composed and cheerful mind: He has been instrumental in preserving to me the dearest blessings of life, he has consoled me when pressing under the shadow of that cloud, which seemed closing over all my prospects of happiness."

These are the feelings of many a parent, and this the conduct which endears to him his medical friend, of whatever description, by whatever title he is distinguished. He is pleased when he hears, that the practice of such a person is increasing, for it is a testimony to talents and worth in which he is inclined to confide, and a proof that such confidence is not misplaced. He is not displeased when he hears of his design of associating with him a PARTNER: He foresees, with real pleasure, that the assuming of a partner will alleviate to his medical friend many painful duties, and extend his usefulness; will disentangle his mind from many lesser cares, and enable him to devote his talents, to cases of more par-



ticular danger. He knows that with his medical friend, principle and duty, and feelings of benevolence, are the motives of all his actions, and gain the slightest of his cares: He is very sure that he will associate no one with him, who is not fit to assist him in his operations, to partake in every scene of his anxieties and labours, and to improve in knowledge, by accompanying him in his practice.

He knows that this person, who is to be associated with his medical friend, is not a shadow to show off his importance, but a second self! no hireling, employed merely to augment his gains, but one destined, by a good education, and worthy dispositions to be useful in his own particular family, and valuable to society! By the interposition of this new attendant, he feels himself little removed, and never estranged, from that person on whom his confidence chiefly rests, while a thousand gratifying and useful objects are attained.

So well is he assured of the affections and warm interests of both, that he is confident the slightest alarm of unusual danger will induce them, with a liberal and generous regard for his happiness, to dismiss all professional jealousies! to think no sacrifice too great to procure for him the assistance of any man of superior talents! to call him, to consult with him, to co-operate with him cordially, whatever his rank, his name, his usual connections, or his prejudices: That they will do this in the true spirit of a profession where there is so much uncertainty, and where the stake too is so precious; where a moment is critical, and a word or thought may save; where ignorance often confutes wisdom, where the sufferings are those



of human nature, which he who now administers relief may soon have to endure.

A physician, no longer distinguished by a sullen solemnity of manners, or a peculiar dress, is remarked only for superior learning and humanity. Called into practice at no early period of life, his education is complete and liberal, and his judgment mature. Employed in cases which require his whole mind, and occupied only at regular hours, his life is, to his latest moments of exertion, a life of composure, of speculation, and of study: his experience, founded on a perfect education, is daily improved by reasoning and by the registering of new facts. The Physician, and the Physician alone, truly feels what it is to improve by experience; for while those who call for his advice are involved in all the vexatious details of practice, in that unceasing anxious labour, that bodily labour, which is a deadly foe to the improvement of the mind! while they are in danger of running on in one unvaried routine of prescription, he retires within himself, and in his closet reflects maturely on every difficulty, studies the case, recollects precedents, and draws forth the resources of our art, from his private reflections, or from his acquaintance with books. His genius, excited by the expressions of confidence and gratitude which it is so natural for relations to use, and by the act of conversing and consulting with the other attendants, by the detail that is given him of the case, contrasted with those signs which he thinks he discovers in the more simple narration of the patient, he forms an opinion which should combine all that ingenuity,

warmed by zeal, and improved by experience, can suggest: Often his opinion must determine the patient's fate.

A physician thus invited by the medical attendants of a family, should feel himself in the sacred relation of umpire in questions of the most agitating nature: His heart must be upright; his conduct independent, and his principles pure and honourable; Incapable of revealing those circumstances of incapacity or misconduct, on the part of his fellow attendants, which could only occasion distress, he is yet incapable of flattery, or policy; of vindicating, or continuing, measures of practice which his art and his understanding condemn: A judge in the last resort, he perceives the delicacy, the danger, of entering into professional quarrels; for, to enter into quarrels, is to be united with a party, to partake of their passions, their interests, perhaps their gains! the loss of independence surely follows, which being gone, learning loses its value, opinion its authority, and the secrets of the consulting room are suspected to be little else than a series of intrigues. When a physician is introduced by those in whose interests he is visibly involved, it seems as if he were called but to vindicate their doubtful practice, to prop up some miserable interests, to witness the calamities which misconduct has occasioned, and to bear his share of blame: In one word, to serve a purpose, and receive a fee.

Miserable must be the ambition of that man, who, educated in a science so much calculated to inspire enthusiasm; in the true principles of a pro-

fession so liberal, and so highly respected, could yet conspire for selfish aims to confound all these dependeneies, and make its several gradations a subject of eontending interests, and its consultations in the hospitals, or in the ehambers of the siek, a scene of politics and intrigue! Most miserable the feelings of that physieian, whose entrance into life is signalized by suspicious eonnections, or whose better talents are debased by complianees unworthy of his high ealling! “ But, IT IS A KNOWN FAET! that in many parts of Europe, physieians, who have the best parts and best education, must frequently depend for their suecess upon apotheearies, who have no pretensions to either the one or the other; and that the obligation to apotheeacaries is too often repaid by what every one eoneerned for the honour of medieine must refleet on with indignation.” \*

Little did this respectable leeturer on our professional duties know, how many base humiliating uses a physieian might be put to; nor that, to the usual complianees required of him by his allies, and partners in trade, might be added the eowardly, unmanly task, of tradueing their rivals.

It is not for the ungracious purpose of eontrasting your conduet with the genuine eharacter of our profession, that I have sketched out its various relations! nor with the invidious desire of proving, that there

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\* Gregory on the Duties and Qualifications of a Physician, page 44.

is, in all those gradations, no place for talents such as you have exhibited Professional character, and the duties of its several ranks and distinctions, is a theme which I dwell upon with pleasure, because I am confident the world, in spite of your dishonourable and worthless invectives, will continue to trust in the efficacy of our art, and to believe, in spite of your disorderly life, that there is something truly estimable in the character of a physician.

I am greatly surprised at finding nowhere in all your voluminous works, any connected view of the several orders of our profession, nor any accidental sketch of the character of a physician; unless, indeed, you could intend that whimsical representation of YOURSELF, beginning, "who is this Drawcansir," for the portrait of a physician.—Yet that cannot be; you were then discharging yourself of a load of vain conceits; endeavouring to represent something infinitely surpassing a physician; drawing your illustrious self at full length, bigger than life! But since you have declined drawing the true and modest character of a physician, a man of worth and learning, a temperate, reasoning, useful man, "a physician furnished with ability, living peacefully in his habitation," you most likely have your reasons; metaphysical they are, I doubt not, for declining this insipid task.

A keen and proud sensibility to all the peculiarities of professional character, should be cherished in youth; for it is at once the highest incitement to study, and the surest basis of every moral excellency; and through every stage of professional



education, the sentiment should be carefully maintained. Were a lawyer to pass through all his professional studies, without imbibing a spirit of liberty; or a divine, without being impressed with religious feelings almost to weakness, were a physician to pursue various branches of his education, without reflecting often on the humane and charitable offices to which these studies were finally directed; the best and most virtuous part of education would be abandoned, and those who, by their opinions and pleadings, defend our liberties and property, and those who should minister to us in sickness or in distress of mind, would cease to deserve any share of our confidence or regard.

Whether a man do or do not excel in his profession, he should at least come up to some given standard in point of skill and moral conduct, before he can deserve confidence, he must have followed some system in his education, and must have established a consistency in his actions and opinions: He must, in short, be a "man of principle."

Principle is valued, not merely as a rule, but as a measure of moral actions: Our confidence in a man's principles, and our real knowledge of them, serve as a theory for his conduct. We are sure that, as a man of principle, he will act consistently; we are almost certain how he will act; and to himself such a rule of action is of infinite value: Without principle, the time for action would be lost in deliberation;—without principle, a man would stop, hesitate, resolve, retract, and "turn and turn again, and



still go on," as caprice, as cunning directed, or objects of desire attracted him.

But principle, is actions considered in the abstract, estimated in moments clear of passion or emotion, and resolved into a rule of life. The sacrifices which constitute the value of disinterestedness, generosity, courage, and every virtue, are, by habit and reason, reconciled to our more selfish, and I fear we must say, to our more natural feelings; principle becomes to us a second nature, more refined, and, if joined to enthusiasm, more noble; and when it obtains an entire ascendancy in all our thoughts, it decides, with the rapidity of instinct, upon the propriety of every motive, and the justness of every action, and gives consistency to the general tenor of our life. "Without this sacred regard to general rules, there is no man whose conduct can be much depended upon:—It is this which constitutes the most essential difference betwixt a man of honour and principle and a worthless fellow; the one adheres on all occasions steadily to maxims, and preserves through the whole tenor of his life one even tenor of conduct; the other acts variously and accidentally, as humour, inclination, or interest, chance to be uppermost.\*

To reduce life to precise method and rule, and to walk through the world with a base and wily circumspection; to respect its slightest prejudices, and observe the most trivial forms, were a fruitless and painful occupation. But a little reflection will teach

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\* Smith's *Thory of Moral Sentiments*, p. 417.

us, that, in our profession, there are peculiarities in the outward character, as well as in the moral conduct of a physician, which even the most exalted genius would do well to observe

A physician is, by the common consent of the public, distinguished from the less honoured members of his profession, by a partial deference to his opinion, and a delicate respect to his feelings. He receives, without being contaminated, or in any way involved in the greedy arts of practice, that prompt and honourable remuneration, which exempts him at once from all temptation, from all suspicion of any thing discreditable, and leaves him no one object of concern, but to maintain his independence, and fulfil his duties;—to preserve his reputation from the slightest taint of partiality, or collusion; from the remotest suspicion of dishonest connections, or alliances contracted from motives of interest. His rank and precedence are allowed: he is consulted chiefly in the most alarming and critical cases; his visits are not frequent, and are at stated hours, and yet his gains are such as make him live in affluence. He is spared the mortifying duty of petty civilities, and all the vexatious details of practice: His tranquillity of mind is never invaded, all his occupations are peaceful; and he is allowed many precious hours for reading and study, for acquitting himself of the public duties of a Lecturer, or for enjoying the happiness of private society.

This is the true independence of a physician;—these are the honours and privileges of his enviable and respectable station, and there results naturally,

from all these peculiarities of his station and his duties, a character distinguished by politeness, liberality, and candour;—gentle and sympathising dispositions, an honest contempt of all that is little or cunning, and a natural aversion from every connection with busy practitioners, and every scene of cabal and intrigue. The delicacies of his situation are such as to impress a sensible peculiarity of character on the manners of a physician, too strong not to be natural, and too visible, especially when studiously and ostentatiously exhibited, not to be a very just subject of ridicule.—But there are some points of character which, in a nation distinguished for morals, and in a profession remarkable for learning and charity, must remain essential and inseparable: The studious habits of a physician must affect his whole manner, and his duties must ever influence his feelings, and regulate at once his conduct to others, his attentions to the sick, his connections with society, and the economy of his time.

No moralist can be at a loss to conceive the true theory of a physician's life! and those most removed from any practical knowledge of the temper of the profession, are able to mark the shoals on which he may make a total shipwreck of his reputation and good name. The Reverend Mr Gisborne, without foreseeing all the disgrace, or giving way to those keen and ardent remonstrances which actual offences beget, counsels the practical physician to cherish his independence and honour. “The proper behaviour of a physician towards his competitors, and to the inferior members of the medical pro-

fession, holds (says Mr Gisborne) a prominent station among the general duties which he has to discharge. In the common course of his practice he will conduct himself to all of his PROFESSION under all CIRCUMSTANCES, with CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES, with CHRISTIAN TEMPER: He will contend with his rivals for public favour, OPENLY and HONOURABLY; he will never attempt to supplant them by ungenerous artifices, by secret obloquy, or by depreciating their estimation in the eyes of the world! by ridicule of their persons, character, or habits! He will not strive to keep exclusive possession of practice, by CRUSHING YOUNG PRACTITIONERS!"

"To possess the countenance and recommendation of an EMINENT APOTHECARY (he adds) is frequently of no small service to a physician, not merely at his outset in life, but even when he is established in practice. Hence mean and interested men have been known to resort to most unworthy methods of securing this assistance." "It is a known fact, (says Gisborne, quoting your father's words,) that in many parts of Europe, physicians who have the best parts, and best education, must yet depend for their success in life upon apothecaries, who have no pretensions either to the one or to the other; and that this obligation is too often repaid, by what every one who is concerned for the honour of medicine must reflect on with pain and indignation." But in this country, it may be presumed, examples of physicians who would contract that obligation on the terms of repaying it in the manner here alluded to, or in any similar way, are so rare, that it is unnecessary to



dwelt on the subject. It may be added, however, that a physician who pushes into business ignorant and undeserving surgeons, and apothecaries, from motives of groundless partiality, or from the impulse of private friendship, without respect to personal merit, acts a part, less culpable indeed in itself, but not less detrimental to the public, than if his conduct had originated in a SECRET UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THEM, founded on VIEWS OF BASE AND FRADULENT ADVANTAGE." \*

No moralist is for a moment at a loss for the true theory of a physician's conduct, because every professional virtue arises out of some corresponding duty.—First, the questions referred to his decision are of the highest interest, involving the life and safety of the patient; and he should be thoroughly acquainted, by reflexion and study, with all the resources of his art; thoroughly versed in all the essential branches of medical knowledge, especially in the structure of the human body, the basis of all just reasoning on diseases: His studies, his pride, and his enthusiasm, should be all professional.

Second, as the whole mind should be reserved for the consideration of those important cases which are submitted to him, he should be no way involved in the details of practice.

Third, as he is the last resource in desperate cases, and the arbiter of discordant opinions, as he must be alike accessible to all, he must be suspected of no collusion, must have no partialities, no enmities, no

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\* The Reverend Lovell Edgeworth on Education.



alliances, no quarrels or intrigues ; he must be a man esteemed for honour, probity, veracity, and real professional learning : . He must be free, when honour and conscience call for such open conduct, to protest against whatever practice he thinks is wrong, or to reprove any apothecary or any medical attendant who shows himself incompetent to the duties he has assumed : He must preserve not only his inward conscience, but his independence of character, pure and spotless, and live in peace and honour. “ *Omnino si quidam est decorum, nihil est profecto magis quam equabilitas universa vitæ.*”

But if a physician will, for the sake of gain and influence, mix in all the detail of practice, and ally himself, not with one old and valued friend, but with a band of apothecary surgeons, ready to call him on every trivial occasion, and shoulder him into every sick chamber, where sometimes his influence, sometimes his name, sometimes even his rudeness, but seldom his learning or skill, humanity or tenderness, may be of use !—can his mind be tranquil ? his time reserved for reflection and study ? his reason composed and calm, or his hours at home devoted to his consultations ?

If a physician, thus partly detached from his best duties, breaking faith with his profession, and leagued almost in copartnery with a gang of busy, restless politic men, destitute of reputation, and boldly bent on gain, takes upon him the task of writing what they could not,—durst not write ! If, writing under the protection of those titles of a Physician and Professor, which are generally supposed to im-

ply every thing honourable and candid, and rarely suspected of covering knavish designs—he undertake to procure for such men the possession of hospitals; the succession, hereditary and elective, by partnership or by inheritance, of the practice of a city! If to traduce their rivals, and perform the glorious atchievement of reducing, by mere force of calumny, all reputation to the very level of theirs, he wrote such systematic, persevering, unprovoked calumny, as never were before acknowledged by any man of learning, as never before visited a respectable profession! If such a physician, writing on surgery and surgical operations, undertook to prove that the profession of his precious associates required neither talent nor study; that any man, the youngest, most ignorant, and helpless member of such a club of surgeons, might, by being elected surgeon, of an hospital, learn, in the routine of an hospital, and merely by seeing such operators as his colleagues, become dexterous in surgery, and rich in all the analogies and reasonings which ripen the judgment!—Is that man to be regarded as a physician? Has he time, has he temper, has he coolness and judgment, to reason impartially, has he good faith to practise honourably as a physician? Has he the independence suited to his almost sacred function? Has he the essential MORAL CHARACTER which I have ventured to describe, and which I hope and believe my profession will acknowledge? No, Sir; he is the very being darkly described by your father.

If, to this, he has a head so embroiled in quarrels, as to be incapable of the almost mechanical labours of his profession ; if, while he is thus distracting his mind with composing scurrilous pamphlets, he takes, not a clerk to transcribe his Consultations, but a Partner to share his labours, to reduce his confused notions to a business-like form, to imitate his manner, to pick up some floundering stray thoughts and vagrant prescriptions, and suit them to the case ! Can there be a more palpable or more guilty fraud ? To you, Sir, I address this pyrrhonic form of language ; you are always ready to reply ; and these are questions to which you must be every way competent ! You, best of all the profession, know how far a man may go in the way of trade.

You have an art for which I know not whether to envy or pity you : You always contrive to deviate into some collateral question, drawing off the public attention with wonderful address, from the dangerous enquiry concerning the learning, talents, and accomplishments most desirable in a physician, to some trivial or mean question about his dress or manners, or fees, or practice ; the cunning with which he humours the infirmities of his patients, and the arts by which he earns his “ daily bread.”\*

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\* “ Mr John Bell, if he had taken the trouble to inquire, might also have learned, that my father was as ARRANT a BROBDIGNAGIAN AS I AM, and that he WIELDED an IMMENSE CLUB with his GIGANTIC ARM ; in PLAIN ENGLISH, that he was a MAN OF SIX FEET HIGH, of a very robust make, and that he walked with a PLAIN OAKEN STICK IN HIS HAND ; that he was equally plain in every  
part

Your father, you say, was a man of a bulky form, plain in his dress and manner, and contributed, by his example, to banish the many disgraceful and ridiculous peculiarities which had long distinguished physicians. We must pardon the indelicate language in which your notions of this respected person is conveyed : We are sensible that it is almost as necessary for your own exculpation, that you should have leave to caricature the gigantic arm and immense club, and the plain, perhaps coarse manners of your father, as the doctrines of his rival Cullen : but these are very unsuccessful arts, and exceedingly ungracious.

For the costume or the manners of any age, I shall not weakly contend ; but for the morals which have been approved in all ages, and the learning which is essential to the right practice of our art, I shall ever, I hope, feel due respect : If the tame and stupid portraits of our forefathers are to be consigned to oblivion, to make way for the extravagant carica-

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part of his dress and manner ; and that he, more than any other individual, contributed, both by his precept and example, to put an end to the ridiculous and disgraceful peculiarities of dress and manner, by which Physicians had long been distinguished : Such peculiarities he treated with ridicule, rather than with grave censure, SO HE DID ALL VIOLENT MEDICAL CONTROVERSIES AND WARFARE, of which he had no better opinion than I have. Perhaps Mr John Bell and his clients, when they become a little better acquainted with my father's writings, which I earnestly recommend to their perusal, nocturna versate manu versate diurna, will profit by his observations on that and many other subjects ; for example, by one which they will find in the most popular and best of all his works," &c.

*Gregory's Memorial*, page 120.



tures of modern times; if the demure character of the old Physician, is to make way for the vulgar and bustle of modern professors, dead to reputation, and busied in intrigue and practice,—I would it were done in silence. Your father, though of unusual bulk, and apparent robustness, might look like a gentleman,—we know that he felt like one.

You have the misfortune, or the cunning, to mistake fashions for virtues: I would not have a physician to walk in forms of sanctity and weeds of woe, with a troubled countenance, and strange demeanour, a slow and solemn pace, and his whole function suiting, with his fore finger raised, as if in the act of drawing horoscopes! Nor simply with a demure aspect, and inflexibly grave face, like Solomon in the tapestry-hanging at the dividing of the child! Neither would I have him altogether follow the opposite system, or learn, in the school of Sir Pertinax, “The art of boozing; or the habit of meeting the smiles of the great, with an amiable risibility of aspect, a modest cadence of body, and a conciliatory co-operation of the whole man, such as may express an officious promptitude for service.”

These, Sir, are fashions, not virtues. But there is a natural association of ideas, by which we are attached to respectable manners, which it will cost you some trouble to counteract. We have been so long accustomed to associate the ideas of modesty, worth, and learning, of humane and just sentiments, with correct or even formal manners, and with a pure, simple, and disinterested system of life, that I know not how



you will be able, even with the aid of your own splendid example, to persuade the world that they ever can be entirely separated. When we discarded the wig and cane, we meant not to abandon the virtues and professional excellencies of the age in which those were worn ! Whether in a bag-wig or in a crop, whether stalking in nice rolled silk stockings, or fluttering in coarse pantaloons, probity and humanity, good manners and gentle dispositions, are ever to be admired.

It has been imputed as a fault to those advanced in years, that they are impatient of every change, and perversely adhere to the manners and maxims of their early youth. But there is something amiable in this: They can distinguish simplicity and goodness, where younger men find nothing but formality and pedantry. Their oldest and dearest friends have been simplified by time and reflection, into that correct, composed, and gentle mode of conduct, in comparison with which we seem all sophisticated. They have encountered a great variety of characters, and pondered long on the real and undisguised virtues of human nature, and have found always the steady, the formal, the simple, the unostentatious habits which you abhor, connected with the most generous dispositions and gentle natures. But there are men who have no idea of that unassuming gentle conduct which attracts spontaneous reverence, who could take no delight in regard silently bestowed, whose bustling and thriving reputation is formed not for future generations, but for

immediate and useful purposes, to whom every restraint is painful, “ whose very buckles and garters are to them as bonds and shackles.” \*

What system of morals best suits our profession, we must feel puzzled to decide, since the highest example, that of the Professor of the Practice of Physic, is in direct opposition to the authority of your respected father, and to all the natural genuine conceptions of every honourable mind. I would fain persuade you, that extravagance of manner, carelessness of thought, contempt of decency, and incredulity in the science he is doomed to practise, are no very conciliating traits in the character of a physician; for his conduct towards his profession, I have referred you to that constitution which naturally results from the several dependencies and duties of its respective members: The colour of his mind I would retrace to the nature of his occupations.

“ Independent of custom, there is a propriety (says Adam Smith) in the character which custom has taught us to allot to each profession,” which something must be essential to the character, and connected with the feelings of a man devoted to peculiar duties. Professional character consists not, in our day, in a mysterious carriage of the body, but is a natural complexion of the mind, resulting from the scenes in which a physician is engaged. We no longer practise that demure carriage, and formal dress, which were supposed to denote sobriety and wisdom: But is there nothing essential in the

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\* Bacon.

character, no habits of mind natural and peculiar to the man who administers continually to the diseases and sufferings of his fellow-creatures ?

Sir, there is a soberness and steadiness of demeanour, most natural to our profession, and especially becoming in those who have long fulfilled its duties, which none but yourself ever thought of denying. It is most natural for the person who studies the mysterious frame in which we live and move and have our being, to assume a reflecting cast of mind ; and he whose duty it is to visit the sick, and hear their complainings, and to ward off the pains and diseases of our nature, if he have a spark of real feeling, is not able at once to divest himself of the serious solemn impressions he receives in midnight scenes of misery ; “ where he sees those who were once the gay and the happy sunk in deep retired distress, sometimes struggling with the severer tortures of a distracted mind.”\*

Politeness, indeed, is more nearly allied to vice than virtue ; often, at least, it is assumed by those who use it as a cover for hollowness of heart : But there is an inward feeling of good will and charity, of sympathy with the pains and sufferings of others, which diffuses an air of candour and gentleness over the countenance and whole carriage of a good-hearted man. This blessed frame of mind, even a good man does not at all times feel, but often loses amidst the fretfulness and vexations that surround him on

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\* Gregory's Lectures on the Qualifications of a Physician, p. 64.

every side: His sensibility to his patient's sufferings are diverted by irritations unworthy of his nature, and unlike his condition in happier moments. But it is a temper of mind I can more easily imagine a worthy physician to attain to, than any other human being; for his thoughts are placid, his vocations regular, his duties all humane and charitable; and I have often witnessed such happy dispositions with approbation and respect. But there is a sort of men who course through a world of misery, through daily scenes which should awaken goodness, with a heart proof against all contagions of sympathy, who flounder on amidst selfish, passionate, distracted thoughts, incurable resentments, profound malice, meditating calumny, while they should be ministering to the distresses of their fellow-creatures.

It is impossible to imagine a more despicable struggle than this: Sure, if such a being exists, his air and manner must betray the inconsistency betwixt the violence and selfishness of his nature, and the solemnity and importance of his duties, leaving no traces of dignity without, or peace within.

Imagine a physician, in what moment of his existence you please, in his study, in his visits, in his hours of retirement, in his conversation; there is not one in which excessive levity can be natural, and but very few in which it can be endured. One thing more I will presume to say; whether you will regard it as any vindication of my sentiments, must depend upon the operations of an intellect not subject to the usual calculations, a disposition very

averse from authority, even though it be paternal. But the virtues I have described as proper to a physician, are those commended by your father in one short comprehensive sentence,—“ Patience, good-nature, generosity, compassion, and all the gentler virtues that do honour to the human heart.” Those occupations which I have ventured to speak of, as the peculiar soil in which such virtues are nourished, may seem to you no better than occasions of “ hysterical grimaces and distortions;” the “ pretences of a novice, affecting to sympathise with the sufferings of humanity;” the blandishments of a hypocrite and simulator of virtue ! but they are sentiments which I have always entertained, and which I believe our profession will acknowledge,—“ all but one, and he—shall go as he is.”



## LETTER XVI.

**ON MEDICAL COPARTNERIES:** Of the pernicious influence of such unprincipled Coalitions, on the Education, Morals, Habits, and Conduct of our Profession.

**COPARTNERIES of SURGEON-APOTHECARIES** described : Of the Preparations of the Candidates for appearing at Surgeons'-Hall: and the exultation of all parties when the scene has been acted : Of the Temper and Talents of Copartneries : of their Arts and Practices ; of the advantages of Numbers, and the **UNANIMITY** of the **MULTITUDINOUS CONSULTATIONS**.

**COPARTNERIES of PHYSICIANS, a New Discovery :** Of the manner of advertising a Partner ; of the infinite advantages to the Public of having **DOUBLE CONSULTATIONS** for **SINGLE FEES!** That the Public and the Medical World owe all the advantages of this discovery to Dr James Gregory, Professor and **PRACTITIONER**, born in the **CENTRE** of the **CITY** of **ABERDEEN**.

**PICTURE**, true and genuine, of a Physician sitting down to calculate the influx of Diseases, as an Astronomer does the Tide-Tables, declaring his incapacity to stem the torrent ; and sitting down in dumb despair, like Lord Chatham and his Aids-de-Camp, among the Dykes of **ZEALAND**.

The whole concluding with a **HYMN** to **APOLLO**.

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You were certainly destined, by great and distinguished talents, for the improvement of science ; and as your studies have been in Metaphysics chiefly, it was most natural that you should disdain those inquiries in Physical Science which have so long and so unsuccessfully occupied the attention of men of ordinary genius, and seek to

improve the practical and moral virtues of your profession. Morals and physics are equally improved by facts, and often one great and leading fact carries us on to most interesting speculations, and brings important truths to light. So it is in the present case; for in the moral world, and within the circles of our profession, there has not occurred, during many years, so extraordinary a fact, as Dr James Gregory.

The enquiry into the education, morals, and peculiar habits, of Copartneries, is in this city a question of a very delicate nature. I fear, Sir, we are treading rudely on the tender feelings of very useful and serviceable men: The question about the influence of Copartneries must disturb somewhat the unceasing and virtuous labours, of your best friends: "But the discussion tends (if I may be permitted to use the words of Dugald Stewart,) to distinguish the cultivated and enlightened minds which adorn the medical profession from the half-informed multitude who follow the medical trade."

Your intention, so openly avowed, of entering into actual partnership with Mr Trotter, was not the first alarm: The profession had reason to believe, that secret practices and sly doctrines of this tendency had made great progress, were beginning to sap the principles and education of our profession, and were sooner or later to have all the support of the splendid talents of the Professor of practice. A conspiracy of six or seven apothecary-surgeons should have been very amusing to a learned Professor, soundly educated as a gentleman and a scholar, and full of just and dignified contempt for trade and trading

alliances. The busy bustling forwardness of such a society ; their awkward ungainly attempts at literary reputation ; the ludicrous inconsistency betwixt their trade of Apothecary-Surgeons, and their assumed functions of playing the part, forsooth, of physicians ; their defective education and droll examinations at Surgeon's-Hall ; the QUESTIONS which they remembered, and the lack of knowledge which they in due time FORGOT ; their hereditary incapacity, hereditary agility, and intuitive cunning ; their occupations during their apprenticeship, and preparations during that period of deep and diligent study, and their ardour, the moment it was at an end, to run at once, and run for ever, “ gaining their bread by unceasing motion of the muscles of the legs,” while a college of really learned and estimable physicians stood apart, looking on their busy strife !—why, this was indeed a scene to provoke the wit, the coarse and blundering wit, of any regardless fellow who took a pleasure in exhibiting our profession in a contemptible light, and representing these men, ironically, as choice specimens of its virtues.

Your continence on this tempting occasion is the more commendable, because you declaim for ever about moral causes, and this, of all the pitiful contrivances for procuring “ daily bread,”—this trade of Copartneries, must be the most offensive to a man of your “ ROMANTIC HONOUR.”—We cannot be insensible of your delicate reasons for declining this tempting subject : Those unacquainted with your real talents, might imagine that you had no other passion but the shallow vanity of

wishing to pass for a wit, and might think this a temptation quite irresistible. But you have shown yourself on this occasion a man of cool and sober discernment: This is the only question you have treated with reserve; these the only medical characters in this city you have mentioned with respect.

This prudent conduct, I do assure you, Sir, impresses me with an opinion of your skill in all the intricacies of trade, more than even your most splendid and eloquent illustrations: And yet that admirable proposal of your's, for "IMPROVING and EXTENDING MEDICAL PRACTICE in THIS CITY, by entering into PARTNERSHIP with Mr TROTTER," must never be forgotten. I should be loath to require of you to renounce any partnerships, or other connections you have already formed, especially if they be any way connected with "daily bread;" and should be sorry to advise you, who have lived so long in habits of pleasing and useful intimacy with numerous Copartneries! in an atmosphere, as it were, of splendid talents and pleasing society, to retire again to the solitude of an independent physician.

Yet I must very honestly and freely explain to you, some difficulties that present themselves to my imagination, when I at any time reflect seriously on YOUR SCHEME OF EXTENDING and IMPROVING YOUR PRACTICE IN THIS CITY, by copartnerships,\* either by this public and avowed connection with Mr Trot-

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\* Vide Censorian Letter.



ter, or by any other less conspicuous, or less creditable alliances. Recollect, Sir, how possible it is that you may be deceived;—that the profit of such alliances may be temporary and trifling, the loss eternal. Recollect, Sir, that in questions of this nature, a man's affections and desires play him false, as his senses do in the case of sensual pleasures: there is a sophistry in a man's selfish feelings, which, when long indulged, never fail to reconcile his principles with his interests, however dangerous to his good name.

I am sensible, that; in questioning any doctrine of yours, I contend against very high authority: The public must have an established opinion of the practical virtues of a Professor, who has for the first time applied the language and reasoning of metaphysics to the purposes of ordinary life; and who is ready to dispute at all times, about “moral causes;” whose undistinguished enmity to Colleges and Corporations is in the express ratio of his love for Partnerships, and his attachment to the new principles of Trade, of which, indeed, he is in a great measure the discoverer.

But have you no fear of the profession declining into base hands? have you, a man of DEEP LEARNING, and a ROMANTIC and CHIVALROUS SPIRIT, no fear lest learning go into disuse, and the science be dishonoured by ungenerous practices! That your own high function fall into disrespect, and a physician of the best education and the best talents, nay a whole college of such men, may come to be neglected, or be called only at the beck of Apothecaries, who have no



pretensions to either ?\* Have you no fear lest your doctrines be pushed too far to the disgrace of their inventor, that not one or two Surgeon-Apothecaries only, group together in copartnership, but that, in place of the simple copula, they mix in sixes and sevens, hunting first in couples, and leashes, and at length in packs, like jackalls ? Would it not grieve you, if the young man destined for such associations, just as you were destined to a professorship from your birth, were hurried through an unprofitable apprenticeship, where simple diligence in mechanical labours were the best proofs of a docile and useful temper, to embark at once in practice, unprovided for that weighty charge, the charge of life itself, which sits heavy on the mind, even of a learned and able man, and saddens many of his hours.

It is impossible, Sir, but that doubts and fears of this nature must have crossed your busy thoughts : But you did right to put away such suspicions from you ; they could only have given you a distaste for things in themselves useful and profitable. The concoction of our interests, is in this like the cookery of our victuals, that there are many little processes which it were best not to know about ; for the most nourishing and palatable dishes are not prepared of the purest materials, nor after the most cleanly fashion.—The state and dignity of a physician supported by a Copartnery of this description, reminds me of the luxury of the Princes and Chiefs of the Friendly and Soci-

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\* Vide Lectures on the Duties and Qualifications of a Physician.

ety Islands : When they drink the cava, a number of their vassals sit round a great wooden bowl, chew the herb, and spit all into the reservoir, and stir the beverage.\*

Institutions, like governments, are liberal or oppressive, according to the manner in which they are administered; and I doubt not all such alliances as you approve of, or administer in, must be directed to the most generous purposes : Yet I cannot conceal from you my suspicions of the effect of such institutions. If COLLEGES and CORPORATIONS are appointed by the law to encourage science, and to ensure good education, and a generous and honourable practice of our art, COPARTNERIES, I am persuaded, are intended for maintaining partial interests, and counteracting all the best principles of our profession. I do not scruple to define a COPARTNERY of SIX OR EIGHT PRACTITIONERS in our learned profession, a Conspiracy, calculated to ensure employment to undeserving, uneducated men ! to substitute gain for reputation, trade for science, a busy petulant diligence in trifles, to the essential skill and manly duties of the profession ! to prevent physicians of experience and learning having any access to practice, except under their auspices, to render them subservient to purposes “ which every one concerned for the honour of medicine, must be shocked to reflect upon : ” A Conspiracy, jealous of every invasion, especially of learning and professional skill, and busy

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\* The Cava thus prepared is a very intoxicating beverage, and it soon covers those who indulge in it with scabs and blotches, and universal leprosy.

to traduce those who affect such reputation, ready to tread out whatever spark of genius happens to appear.

Excuse, Sir, the solecism of thus premising an opinion when I profess inquiry : but it is the way with us all ; our opinions, as we choose to describe them, are made up of interests, prejudices, and passion ; and we look around us in cool moments for reasons to vindicate them. You have, no doubt, your opinions and your prejudices on this subject ; you have indeed experienced, in your own person, and publicly proclaimed, the value of such combinations. I cannot pretend to have all your practical experience of the advantages of copartneries, yet I have had one practical advantage, which no one, in any other city in Europe can boast of, that of witnessing, during half my life, and ever since I could reason, the operations of a trading copartnery, splendid beyond all competition, including all the peculiarities of that kind of literary establishment, and exemplifying all the principles of Copartnery and Trade.

Whether I should give way to those, perhaps unjust, prejudices which I have conceived, against PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS of this nature, I confess I can hardly judge, till I have deliberately reflected on the subject, and tried those prejudices by reason. The appeal I am now about to make, is a fair and public appeal. I shall state my speculative notions on that question, in which yours are already declared by your practice. Society, Sir, would be a mere standing pool, were it not kept in motion by conflicting opinions, which, like perpetual agitation of the sea,

prevents corruption: And since it is so ordained, that there should be a variety of opinions on every point, mine may, on the present occasion, perchance be right. Let us inquire, with candour, into the principles of this kind of society; it is a question affecting, not very remotely, the aspect of our profession, and the lives of thousands.

Of the ill effects of every institution, whether public or private, the most to be dreaded is its influence on education: And there will be found, I believe, not only in speculation, but in fact, a wide difference betwixt the acquirements and dispositions of a young man, unassisted, unprotected, proud, and confident in his talents, and ambitious of reputation, struggling alone, yet undismayed, through the first difficulties of life; and those of one destined to be associated with a thriving copartnery, inspired with no ambition to excel, and sure of every object that he has ever been taught to covet: One who is excited by no difficulties, who knows no ambition, who is roused by no spirit of emulation, but slumbers out the years, which are with others the period of education and of enthusiasm, assured of the peaceful succession to his father's or his master's practice.

The SPIRIT of COPARTNERSHIP, far from promoting emulation, is likely to extinguish all ardour for science, to defeat every purpose of every public institution, and to assimilate every thing with its own nature. It carries along with it a very peculiar system of education, habits and morals: Counteracted by this novel institution, our University,



which trains up learned physicians for all parts of the world, can have no such happy influence on the education of the city.

Of all the bad influences of the Copartnery Trade, its influence on education is, in my opinion, the most deadly to morals, and the most to be deprecated in a learned profession. To preserve a gainful profession, where the ultimate object is oftener fortune than fame, pure from all other interests than those which talents and real learning should create, would be indeed a romantic expectation ; but to restore to professional learning its just rewards, is not. I hold it as an incontrovertible principle, that individual character and peculiar talents, are necessary to the improvement of science ; that the enthusiasm and ardour of those who are inspired with a desire of excelling, must have fair play, or there is an end to all kinds of improvement. It is the public that reaps the benefit of those talents, which are nourished in solitude and silence,\* which “grow like the summer’s grass, fastest by night.”

To nourish this high ambition, the mead of learning, distinction, and fame, some degree of estimation, some chance of an honourable station in life, must be reserved as its just reward. This hope of esteem and honour can alone impell a man of generous dispositions through his dreary tasks, or encourage him “to climb to the vantage ground of science.” This honourable ambition has

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\* “ Mire enim silentio et tenebris animus alitur.”



ever animated the distinguished members of our profession ; great talents have never yet been prostituted to trade ; of which the Hunters, and Hewsons, the Cullens and Browns, were every way incapable ! Partners, substitutes, Connections in Trade, they had none : their reputation was at once their pride, and their care, and their sole riches : “ But there will be none such evermore, till in some better age true ambition and the love of fame, prevails over avarice ; and till men find leisure and encouragement to PREPARE THEMSELVES for the profession, by climbing up to the vantage ground (so my Lord Bolingbroke expresses it) of science, instead of grovelling below in a mean but gainful application, to all the little arts of chicane.” \*

If a science, involving the safety of thousands, can, by any course of politics, be made to fall exclusively into the hands of illiterate men, and be practised in “ a mean and gainful application to the little arts of chicane,” it should become a subject of deep interest to all ranks of people.

I would not, Sir, for all the gains of all the copartneries of this city, embark in politics which tended this way, bringing such manifest ruin on our profession. As a liberal and a learned one, its estimation and its morals depend on the education of its rising members : Morals and science must here be closely allied ; for a man, proud of his science, needs no little arts, and cannot endure a mean ac-

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\* Letters on the Study of History.

tion. To lower the QUALIFICATIONS of a PHYSICIAN a very little, is to DEBASE his PROFESSION VERY MUCH; and if once it comes to pass in any city, that a little reading and writing, and much of the vulgar and obsequious faculty of running, come to be sufficient accomplishments for "those who practise as the ordinary physicians, at least in those disorders which are not esteemed dangerous at first," there is little chance of that continuing to be esteemed a liberal profession; every individual of the profession will feel his place in society lowered by that mortifying change.

The period of probationary study in our profession is too short to be abridged. Five years! a short space, indeed, for acquiring an accurate knowledge of the structure of the human body, and a general view of all the departments of physical science: If this be abridged or wasted in puerile or trivial occupations; if a boy be turned out upon the world to dishonour our profession, who knows no higher ambition than to be able, ("from a short catechism") to answer by rote some formal invariable questions, "What are the coats of the eye?" "What are the contents of the abdomen?" If no gradual initiation into the difficulties of our profession be allowed; if no opportunities be provided for him of mixing experience with speculation, or of being gradually made acquainted with the great charge he has undertaken. If a young man of this description, afraid, yet forced to pass as a surgeon, be taken up, and, for favour or for hire, made to run about, practise unpremeditatedly, uninterruptedly, for

ever, without one vacant hour while he lives, to improve his mind! dreadful consequences must ensue.

When once entered upon such a profession, its duties and its interests admit no pause. If the short period of preliminary study be abridged, every step towards farther improvement, every act by which practical skill is acquired, though meritorious in other professions, cannot be guiltless in ours. A man who, "hastening to become rich," rushes unprepared into practice, must know that he is acquiring knowledge which already stands recorded in books, at the expence of the health and feelings of a fellow-creature; must be often conscious of having occasioned pains which might have been spared; of having lost that life, which a little deliberation and constancy in study, might have enabled him to save! How very precious that life seems, which might have been saved! How sad an aggravation of a loss in itself irrecoverable, no thinking nor feeling man will be at a loss to know: "*Est enim luctuosissimum genus mortis, quæ non ex natura nec fatalis videtur. Nam uticunque in illis qui morbo finiuntur, magnum ex ipsa necessitate solatium est; in iis vero quos ACCERCITA mors aufert, HIC INSANABILIS DOLOR EST, quod creduntur potuisse diu vivere.*"

There are temptations to this species of criminality, which no ordinary mind has power to resist; and I have undertaken to analyze the feelings of two beings, opposite in every propensity, an AMBITIOUS and a COVETOUS YOUNG MAN: The one prepared to climb, under every discouragement, "up to the van-

tage ground of science ;" the other satisfied to " grovel below in a mean and gainful application to all the little arts of chicane :"—The one, proud to excess of his talents, disdains even riches, when not accompanied with homage to those powers of the mind, which he has cultivated through a long course of study ; the other, disdaining nothing which can increase his gains, " for all his little soul is centered there : " The one, depending on himself and his own native powers, which ripen under this strong ambition for the public service ; the other, depending on a father or a master for hereditary practice, which he ensures by fawning courtesy, and cultivates by every low and cunning art.

The young man, who is destined to be useful in a COPARTNERY of SURGEONS, must be early useful, and is hurried unprepared into practice. The gains of that kind of trade are set before him from the first, as the sole reward of his diligence ; and he must be ignorant, indeed, who casts his eyes around him, and especially who looks up to his immediate patrons, without discerning, that these rewards are not to be earned by professional reputation, by long delay in the regions of " lean and wasteful learning ! " —learning which is at all times an invidious distinction, but among such associates, is a cumbrous and weary, I had almost said, a disgraceful load. He is conscious that he must make himself early useful, by simple diligence in mechanical labours : and with all the hardihood which his condition inspires, and the example of his superiors allows, he presents himself before a college, full of confusion and alarm, to



be examined ! *i. e.* to answer a few unmeaning questions, and a few only, conned from some "catechism," (I think you call it) and having, when this scene is over, recovered a degree of that idiot confidence, which was repressed only for a moment by stupid fears, he rushes UNPREPARED into PRACTICE.

What we see daily we cannot but believe, and, therefore, we need not doubt what Dr Gregory says, when he describes this "catechism!" Wretched, indeed, the education which leads to a conclusion like this, the ambition which leads to so unprincipled a course of life ! But who that stands assured of such easy gains will delay them, or watch by night to attain superfluous skill ! skill in surgery, so rarely to be used ! skill in medicine, which is reduced to a very form, requiring neither study nor reflection ? You very obligingly inform us, that such beings are "the ordinary physicians of this city, at least in cases at first supposed not to be dangerous ;" but how they can at all become physicians, ordinary though they be, you have not condescended to explain. You have represented them in great perplexity, answering school-boy questions at Surgeons-hall, and next moment we find them the ORDINARY PHYSICIANS of this city ! Really, Sir, there is something in this worth knowing, if our philosophy could find it out. Far from ever imagining such a course of things likely to be vindicated for any purpose, by any physician, I have ever continued under the influence of a prejudice, for which I have to blame a man very eminently distinguished for learning and talents, I mean Lovell Edgeworth, who, in his treatise on Edu-



eration, says, " Pharmacy is also a necessary branch of his profession; but he need not give any great portion of his time to it; for were he to pound and compound during a whole apprenticeship, it would not contribute much to his medical skill."\*

To climb the vantage ground of science, and become soundly master of its principles before we engage in practice, is a most essential act of constancy and virtue; and especially it is so in our profession, where, from the moment of entering on its unremitting anxious duties, there is danger of being quite estranged from study, and losing all hope or desire of farther improving the mind. Fortunately for the character of our profession, copartneries of sixes and sevens, exist in no other city in the known world. Young men, destined for our profession, are destitute of fortune, and especially of that most pernicious of all fortune, a hereditary trade; that nursery of stupid mediocrity, and unblushing, blundering ignorance.

A young man depending solely on his native powers, is soon taught to feel the importance of knowledge, and becomes conscious, that his fortunes must rise on his reputation; that he must struggle upwards, perhaps through enmity and obloquy, to eminence and employment. He is sent by his parents to a university, where, if he have an ingenuous mind, worthy of cultivation, he has at once every advantage and every incitement to study. His ambition is depressed

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\* Lovell Edgeworth on Education, p. 240.

by no base expectations, his hours occupied by no unworthy employments; he has it in his power to associate with the studious, and to devote, for a series of years, his whole mind to the uninterrupted pursuit of medicine and philosophy, and such accomplishments as suit his future station in society. When his thoughts bend homewards, he cannot but remember, that to fulfil the expectations of his friends, he must excel in study: his reputation for diligence and abilities must prepare the way for his return: and when, from year to year, he revisits his native place, he is animated to new and arduous exertions by the proud expectations which he is conscious his parents have formed of him, or by feeling, that the fate of his family depends upon his success.

Nor when his studies are completed, does he return to cultivate some ignorant, narrow-spirited master, with low obsequious arts; nor to abandon the studies which are his delight and his pride; nor to rush at once, though not unprepared, into practice. His friends are earnest to promote his interests, but he is aware, that they will best fulfil their kind intentions, by commending his talents boldly and truly: He is careful, therefore, to maintain a reputation in science, to improve it by diligent reading, to be found employed in respectable studies in every interval of practice. While his practice grows slowly, he has leisure to reflect, to improve, and to add experience to learning; he has been too long proud of his acquirements in science, to allow any thing mean or ungenerous in the practice of this art.

Thus may we trace a young man of independent principles, till he arrives at mature years, to a high

station in his profession; with improving talents, founded in study, refined by experience, and recommended by generous and honourable principles. This is a process fit to form a man worthy of our profession; and it constitutes a part of this system, that there is a secondary period of study, a more precious one than that spent at the University, in which the tasks of the memory are succeeded by the exercise of reason: a period, when practice has not yet accumulated, the study of books is not yet disused, when the intellect and character are formed by slow reflection on the duties of practice, and by exercising of “the cardinal virtues of the heart.”

How unlike this the education or pride of a young man who is to be useful in a copartnery? He is prepared for his destined services by a very different process. The process! Why should we describe the process? We know the full measure of his attainments, on the very day of his entering on practice; they have been, in an unguarded moment, the subject of Dr Gregory’s blundering wit—A man of wit spares not his most familiar friends! “Some (he observes) will be grossly ignorant of their profession, of which perhaps they may never have LEARNED ANY MORE than just enough to enable them to PASS at THEIR EXAMINATION, and even this little THEY may have learned by a short CATECHISM, which THEY never understood, but only got by ROTE. Some smart lads may have had a good deal of knowledge, JUST when they CAME OUT of their APPRENTICESHIPS, NINE-TENTHS of which they may have FORGOTTEN in the course of five, ten, or twenty

years, passed without study, and with little practice." \*

This is indeed a wonderful description ; it bears all the marks of a master's hand, sketching after an original, with whose habits and features he was very familiarly acquainted. With such unquestionable authority before us, that we cannot doubt the existence of this sort of unprincipled ignorant creature. We know nothing that can ease our mind of the incredulity natural, upon being told that such uneducated creatures are received into a learned profession, or explain the existence of such a character, unless it be the Spirit of Copartnery and its assimilating influence.

When a young man is taught to look forward to the quiet succession of a father or a brother's practice, his hopes and expectations in life become the rule of his exertions. He falls under the controul of the lowest passions ; ambition and emulation are at an end ; and diligence in study would be a real folly. His success no way depends on reputation ; in place of cultivating science, he feels that he has to cultivate only the caprices of a master, or comply with the greedy hasty desires of a father, who fearing, or actually feeling, the decline of nature, never knows one hour of ease or peace, till he sees his boy well established in the trade.

The master of a young man, destined to be his assistant, is equally indifferent to education, and

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\* Gregory's Memorial against Mr John Bell, being his second Quarto, page 8th.

more intent on practice. He goes in search of an assistant to suit his purpose :

“ Negligit, atque alium bipidem sibi quærit asellum.” \*

Him he breeds up in the hopes of substantial service, and is not indifferent to the increasing gains which follow the assuming ANOTHER partner, and ANOTHER, and ANOTHER ! He knows the world, and likes to see a young man following the interests of his profession sharply : Impatient of labour, and sensible of declining years, he hurries this lad through an apprenticeship of insipid drudgery and senseless hurry, where his company and his occupations fill his mind with something very different from ardour in science.

Has a young man, thus destined to trade and co-partnery, that fair opportunity of study, or those incitements which are required to do justice to his talents ? Does he enjoy five years of uninterrupted study ; or has he set before him an example of zeal for science, or any object of emulation ?

No, Sir, he confounds the busy restless condition in which he lives, with the quiet important duty of education ! He never reflects, till the alarming period arrives, in which, ignorant of every thing like science, he is yet obliged to undergo something like an examination : Then he betakes himself to that dishonest expedient “ conning a catechism of names,” with which no rational ideas are connected ; repeats methodical answers with trepidation, to questions

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\* Juvenal, ix.



which his future associates in the copartnery ask, from their more exalted station in the College, with a degree of the same faltering and hesitation: They contrive, betwixt them, to complete the exhibition, so important in its consequences, so very ludicrously important, and which is yet the subject with these actors of serious congratulations, and long and fond recollection. He reads a dissertation, too, “just fifteen minutes, which he never wrote, and so proceeds a graduated dunce.”

Sure, Sir, if there be any living being in danger of entering thus unprepared upon our profession or going thro’ the mean disingenuous process you describe, in order to pass at Surgeons’-Hall, it must be the destined member of a Copartnery! And if it be the fact, which I boldly affirm it is, that when a young candidate for the succession of a Copartnery, or a young Assistant to a Copartner, is received, it is established and enacted, according to the firm of the copartnery, “That he shall not for TWELVE YEARS thereafter practise surgery, (i. e. independently of the copartnery) in this city!” I believe no man will doubt, that next to his honest and faithful observance of this engagement, the greatest security such society can have of his never becoming a rival, is his being thoroughly ignorant in his profession, and incapable by want of education. In short, Sir, they would wish to have him the very creature you describe! ignorant at the first! and encreasing in ignorance in exact proportion as his practical energies encrease!

There appears to me, in this peculiar description of medical men, no one distinguishing feature, but

this unmeasurable appetite for gain, and this love of practice will assuredly make them students and philosophers, hard readers, and deep thinkers, whenever the public shall resolve to make them feel that such qualities are required; that not every one will be encouraged to practise a difficult science who can just read and write, and that not well.

While the head of a copartnery plainly desires, not an intelligent, sensible, and able assistant and friend, but to assemble a society of six or seven racers and runners, to encrease the gains of practice, the principle of his selection, and of the education of the younger members, must be ignorance. Will he invite into his house those who are conspicuous for enthusiasm and talents, and who have given early proofs of proficiency in the medical art? What is first required? Incapacity. What second? Incapacity. What third? Still incapacity! A gentleman he must not be; his address might be dangerous, his freedoms displeasing; nor a scholar, that were a reproach to the sober, judicious, homely education, which the principal received by the accidents of his birth and education, which he never had time nor courage to improve; he must not be celebrated for professional talent, else he would be, from the first moment, not an useful assistant, but a hateful rival, under whose star his spirit would be rebuked, as Anthony's by Cesar. Full hardly will you find a father bred in ignorance, zealous to educate his son above his own pith; and not only do those natural jealousies interpose; not only are the adjuncts of a copartnery hurried on in this preparation, for something very differ-

ent from “climbing to the vantage ground of science,” but the uses to which they are destined, the art of keeping books, and drawing bills, and pursuing practice, diligently “gaining their bread with unceasing motion of the muscles of the legs,” require no such refinements in science or learning.

The man is of an aspiring spirit, who, in the midst of indulgence and ease, searches for knowledge; still more virtuously diligent is that man, who, in the hours of relaxation from depressing, unremitting toil, seeks to improve his mind; but there are professions consisting so purely of mechanical labour, and yet so closely allied with science, as to inspire all the bitterness of envy, which men of science ever feel, without the slightest pretensions to support the spirits under such painful irritation.

Men thus occupied are to be pitied more than blamed: Had they the genius of angels, which I by no means suspect, and the diligence of a Milton, in “industrious and select reading, steady observation, and insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs,”—What could such an earnest desire of study and improvement avail those destined to such unceasing occupations?

Science is an acquisition of the memory, and requires time and diligence; but these men have not even the penetration to know, how much the improvement of their natural talents have been neglected; on how low a level they stand; and never can have the magnanimity to forego for a few years, the gains of practice, and set themselves in privacy and silence to improve their minds, to supply the shame-

ful defects of their scanty education ! The intervals of bodily labour are spent in lassitude and languor, no higher incitement being provided for the mind than the desire of enlarging the gains of practice, and the arts of circulating private scandals, and besetting the avenues of a city with mean solicitations. To such persons the Surgeon's-Mate of a Regiment is a Prince in manners, and a philosopher in mind. Who of the rising generation are to study the profession, if such men can, with or without your help, obtain its rewards ? Who will study in solitude to become learned and able, conscious that his acquirements will be despised ; that he is to be outstripped by such base competitors ?

A young man of spirit, rather than devote himself to such occupations, and pass his existence in this hopeless mediocrity, would risk his life on any adventure ; would court the dangers of war ; endure the burning climates of the East or of the West ; or slave under some capricious and fretful patient, posting from country to country, not in hopes of regaining health, but of beguiling death for a while of a destined prey ; be, as it were, his better menial, and dole out to him the flattering unction of hope ; for, in such an occupation he would see various nations, and visit happier climates.

Sir, when I reflect on the scene you describe, when I think of men ENTERING on a profession like ours with so little knowledge, and GROWING more IGNORANT as they advance in years, I would fain believe that this is not the usual result of education, nor the common course of life, but peculiar to this



description of practitioners : And that it is from this that our profession, to which learning was long esteemed a needful passport, and genius a powerful recommendation, is beginning to lose that character, which, according to Adam Smith, distinguishes the learned professions ; “ That all the most generous and liberal spirits are eager to crowd into them.”

I confess myself very forgetful ; I hardly recollected, when I endeavoured to define the difference betwixt a Learned profession and a Trading Copartnery of Surgeons and Physicians, any test, by which they might be distinguished : I hope I may be allowed the use of this admirable definition as a test ! and it will give you the more pleasure that it is, at the same time, a syllogism, “ Copartneries are not learned professions ; for we do not find that all the most generous and liberal spirits, are eager to crowd into them.”\*

When all the LEAST GENEROUS OF LIBERAL SPIRITS are thus associated in COPARTNERY, what must be the exultation of the projector to find, that if trade requires partners, partners promote trade. That each NEW PARTNER has the art and diligence to procure patients, and multiply prescriptions, and increase the

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\* I should rather think the fathers of the hereditary surgeons, and framers of copartneries, had adopted the homely maxim ascribed to the inhabitants of GLENBURNIE ; who, having a notable antipathy to innovations, and disdain of improvement, repressed all efforts at fastidious reformations in manners, or needless culture of the mind, by this excellent saying, “ Gin they do as we hae done, they’ll do weel enough.”



general gains in a surprising ratio ! To find himself at the head of a band of many whom he may lawfully call surgeons, for they have been able “ to answer, by rote, questions conned from a sort of catechism which they never understood ? ” He has assumed partner after partner ! a FIRST ! a SECOND ! a THIRD ! a FOURTH ! a FIFTH ! till Partners, Apprentices, Physicians, Patients, Messages, Books, and Bills, Shops, and Assistants, strange faces presenting themselves to patients from day to day, in time of sickness and fever, and dangerous discrepancies in practice, accumulate in a visible and ludicrous degree. The potent head of such a copartnery sits the while, with all imaginable solemnity, in the midst of those busy creatures, like Briareus, or the Vitzli-Putzli of the Peruvians ; a dull and wooden image, a mere thing of stone, or wood, or lead, but with a hundred hands, grasping all kinds of ludicrous and base utensils, a sceptre, a dagger, a halter, a purse, a bell, a trumpet.

The bustle of a highly educated and experienced physician is no small hinderance to his offices ; but the hurry and confusion of a set of Shop-boys turned Surgeons, on the credit of one very ill educated man, the head of a Copartnery, so cunning as to invent and institute such a Society, is, indeed, most disgusting. But such a person, having once ventured on this species of gain, there is no end to the experiments on the credulity of the public. The head of a copartnery, the head of such a gang of journey-men surgeons, cares not to how many he delegates his supposed skill ; whether to one, or to five copartners, is a matter of mere indifference ! he willingly de-

volves it to such a number, as could not, by any contrivance, present reports of the condition of their-tients, once in eight days!

A patient, who imagines that he has placed himself under the care of a person, who justly or unjustly has acquired some reputation for learning, finds out, before he has long indulged this dream, that, in place of this man of learning, he has fallen, by successive accident, into the hands, and almost through the hands, of MANY VARIOUS SURGEONS, declining from this meridian sun of science, down by degrees, down, down to the very antipodes!

No wonder, "if maladies, not at first, at least, esteemed of dangerous consequence," soon require the well-practised physician of the copartnery to lift him out of this despair and utter darkness.

Good God, Sir, is this a system for a great and wealthy city? Can economy account for such imprudent acquiescence in the combinations of cunning unprincipled men? Can any people prefer the elder apprentices of such a copartnery of grown surgeons, (which is, in other terms, as you say, "grown to be ordinary physicians,") to a College of real Physicians, whose apprenticeship has been a long protracted study of their profession, and whose degree is the discharge and the certificate of their apprenticeship having been fulfilled; whose preparation for practice has consisted in a due combination of experience with study, not discontinued suddenly, to run at once, and run for ever! Indeed, Sir, if there be a people so infatuated as entrust their health, not to men of acknowledged ta-

lents, but to the members of such a society, I must suppose them no other than the "milch cows" you speak of, or the PATHETICAL OX, lowing and moaning over the foul contract, which delivers him over, horns, hide, and all, to the BUTCHERS and CURRIERS of the city!

Seeing that health is the greatest earthly blessing, and the apprehension of danger the most distracting, when it threatens those who are dear to us; it is a matter of perpetual wonder, how solicitation, intrigue, or any kind of influence, should make low and ignorant men acceptable! But here we have found one gap by which they may break into the profession: This is the fact, that when a message is sent to a shop,—(I request, Sir, that you nor your precious friends will not affect ignorance of what a shop is:—Sir, a shop is a shop, going through a shop" is not so bad a road for a physician, as going "down a chimney, or through the privy," to get into the profession, though not unlike these methods; )—when a message comes to a SHOP, it matters little who is sent to the person's aid: If beyond the rank, at least above the age, of an Apprentice, he is received; if, having fulfilled the duties of an apprentice for five years, he be dignified with the title of Partner, Oh, then he is most acceptable, HE IS ONE OF THE PARTNERS!" "he is really a very attentive and very obliging young man."

Now, the same humble fawning courtesies which ensured his master's approbation, wins the patient's favour. He is one of those, whose servile and politic

attentions are no way excited by real feeling, nor regulated by sense or goodness, but are the same when the finger aches, as when the life is in danger; and are equally successful in both cases: He is full of those trivial attentions, and that whistling diligence, so easy and so natural for an ignorant man to practise; and thus he fastens on a family elaims of a sort of gratitude, or good will mixed with pity. But soon he fastens on them the most unaccountable of all elaims, "that he alone, forsooth, understands the CONSTITUTION of the FAMILY!" who understands no constitution, physical nor moral, under heaven.

It must be acknowledged, that there are no institutions so defective, but that a man really impartial, may find something to commend; and I confess, that in one thing the members CONSPIRING in a Copartnery have, when all assembled, vast advantages over the vacillating and timid conduct of an unsupported individual, however deep his erudition or skill. Omissions, mistakes, and misapprehensions, we are liable to in practice; we are all most liable, when in a hurry, even though in a hurry to do good; but when in a hurry to be rich! why, blunders are inevitable. You have yourself expressed this in very lively terms, when telling the younger members of the College of Physicians, that "he that hasteth to be rich, shall not be innocent." Now, Sir, if faults are inseparable in all modes of practice, surely it is an excellency in any combined system, to provide against such faults. And the natural remedy for faults, and for the various accidents of practice, is CONSULTATION. This is the constitu-



tional remedy, as one may say, which being preserved pure and independent, proves at once a relief to the practitioner, and a consolation to the patient. And when can a consultation be procured so NUMEROUS, so UNANIMOUS, as by a gentleman at the head of a COPARTNERY? It is indeed an admirable corrective for all the other inconveniencies of this kind of practice; and, accordingly, such a consultation can be commanded at all times, by the lowest retainer and runner of the society.

FIRST, It should be remembered, that faults and accidents are inseparable from practical duties, and yet accidents, mere accidents, might be cruelly imputed by strangers to want of skill. SECOND, That accidents having once happened, are irremediable! Is it not then most natural, most beneficent, to conceal what it can do no good to disclose; to approve of practice which it is too late to correct? Is it not a soothing reflection to a medical man, that things can be managed with that pious regard to the feelings of the sufferer or his friends?

Though I have never known the pleasure of this kind of confidence, I can easily imagine the happy and composed feelings of a man who, when misfortune threatens him, can look round upon a troop of precious friends, each of whom he may lawfully call a surgeon! each of whom has a kindly and generous attachment to the interests of his fellow-practitioners! each of whom, too, has his share of influence over the fortunes of a physician. Sir, it is a society so happily constituted, that no personal misfortunes can



befal any one member, with which all do not sympathise ! nor any reproach ever reach the public ear.—

You have been extremely witty, Sir, on “MULTITUDINOUS CONSULTATIONS” in an Infirmary, too ! —consultations upon the diseases of the poor, where, though there may be occasions of discrepancy of opinion, there can hardly be any selfish cause of collusion. But here, in this private association, when what is ludicrously called a CONSULTATION is required, it would be indeed a miracle, if there were any discrepancy of opinion ! Here, Sir, is a consultation, cordial, harmonious, strenuous in unanimity ; where every thing already done is right ! every thing proposed ingenious ! For my share I wonder, why, when you were so loudly clamorous about the contentious consultations of the Infirmary, you did not mention this with approbation, as a proof that a mob of the most ignorant persons might yet have discretion and honour enough to be unanimous always ! Indeed, Sir, when the head of such a copartnery surveys his associates, it must be with exultation, and he may well say with crook-fingered Jack, in the Beggars Opera ; “ where shall we find such another set of practical philosophers.”

This, Sir, is a combination of skill and numbers, which has a very imposing appearance, and preserves its ascendancy, even in the most unpropitious circumstance. The patient may die, but “ numbers CERTAINLY were consulted,”—“ every thing CERTAINLY was done that skill could do !” Though all the while, the only party consulted was a party of men leagued together for good and for

bad, but chiefly for mutual vindication, and common gain. And when that dismal scene draws on, which for a while makes a man reckless of life, and all is mournful and silent in his house, there remains one only consolation, that as he was liberal and generous to every one within his reach, all was done that human art could do: It would, indeed, be dreadful to believe, it is impossible for the suffering husband; or father to believe, that ignorance conspired to occasion his irreparable loss.

There are incalculable advantages to the individual, in being thus united with numbers: and the whole system of practice is perfect,—just as the British Constitution is perfect, not by the written and indentured laws of the copartnery, so much as by the natural libations and balancings of the several powers and interests; by mutual facilities and reciprocities among its members; and by the singular equality of talents.

Another thing especially admirable is this: That the young Gentleman, whose manners are so very obliging, whose habits of diligence are so remarkable, and who so PERFECTLY UNDERSTANDS the CONSTITUTIONS of THE WHOLE FAMILY! has, if not a perfect capacity, at least a singular aptitude, for performing all the operations of Surgery, and a prescriptive right of performing them on those, whose “constitutions he understands.” It is, indeed, very likely, that he might be at a loss to distinguish any one bone of the body for any other; the bones of the foot from those of the hand, those of the neck from those of the back; it is certain, that he could dissect no one smaller ar-

tery or nerve in a dead body, laid out before him : Yet such is the character and confidence he happily acquires by his association with practitioners of this description, that you will not find him decline any Surgical Operation, however singular the disease, however intricate the blood-vessels or nerves that are to be dissected.

All this, as you observe, he learns by EXPERIENCE : and it were a shame, that a young gentleman of such talents for business, should be delayed in learning these things by any more laborious method ! Being the surgeon, or rather physician in ordinary, as you say to a family, for the prescribing of Emetics and Blisters, where such remedies are least needed, *i. e.* “ in cases not at first esteemed of dangerous consequence,” he performs the office of SURGEON to that family, when, from obstruction of Urine, a Fall, a Fracture, an Aneurism, or a threatened Cancerous disease, any member of it comes to be in IMMINENT DANGER, requiring, one would imagine, EMINENT SURGICAL SKILL.

It happens most unaccountably, and most fortunately, that his surgical talents improve in an inverse ratio to his knowledge ; just at the period you describe, in which he is FORGETTING, in the course of practice, the questions he had learned, but not understood, he becomes capable of all the most difficult operations ! and because the family have the misfortune to call him their Surgeon, he is their surgeon ! It would, forsooth, be discreditable for him not to be capable of every thing in his profession ; of consulting on every disease, of performing every ope-

ration; and accordingly, he most sacrilegiously adventures to perform those dissections on the Living body, which he never attempted on the Dead! He attempts operations, which he trembles to think of; reads a surgical book over night, in which that operation is described; pores over some wretched drawing (if he has any such book) for a delineation, or something like a delineation, of those Arteries and Nerves which, if on the morrow he divides in operating, the stroke is mortal! or which, not knowing, he dare not approach in dissection; but must leave the roots of a disease, to prove the cause of death, to him not so ruinous, but to the unhappy patient more lingering, more terrible.

There are diseases so desperate as to make us brave the prospect of instant dissolution: That danger, the danger of a patient's expiring under operation, weighs heavy upon the spirits of an individual surgeon unsupported; But the person here described, is of a sworn brotherhood, and there is at his call, "a band of practical philosophers" ready to support his pretensions, which they choose to call his reputation. He looks for the course of the arteries which may occasion danger, with all the perplexity of a War-Minister, who, knowing nothing beyond the Thames, studies on a map, the courses of the Ebro or the Douro, the rapid Rhine or lazy Scheldt, and blunders onwards to some fatal catastrophe!—but it is a responsibility most conscientiously divided by all his friends, for all the talents must conceal the blunder, or share the obloquy.



Even the ordinary language of a Copartnery, is tinctured with its peculiar morals; so that I am not certain that it will be always understood. One would imagine, that when a gentleman of this profession, for it is quite a distinct profession, expresses his apprehensions or regret, at the thoughts of "losing a patient," a man of common apprehension would imagine, "he feared lest the patient should lose his life;" yet, perhaps, no two expressions are so far from synonymous: I can even imagine it necessary, in order that a surgeon may not lose his patient! that the patient lose his life.

Let us state the question with simplicity, and with a just reference to the morals and usages of such a society. When so MANY gentlemen, if not highly educated, at least PERFECTLY acquainted with the ART OF MEDICINE, are associated on such generous and liberal principles; is it fit that they submit their judgment, or be any way accountable for their practice, to any one so little acquainted with the principles of the profession, as to have no such connections? Will they acknowledge difficulties, or admit advice, or call any independent physician, or skilful surgeon to their aid? Will they permit a patient to be cut for the Stone, whose disease they have proclaimed to be a disease of the Prostate? Will they permit any other surgeon to heal an ulcerated breast, which they have condemned as cancerous? to relieve a stricture, which they have not been able to relieve? to cure a sore, which they have been unable to cure? or to introduce a Catheter, where they have been unable to pass it? No, let the bladder be punctured



rather, or any disorder among the parts take place, but let there be no disorder in practice. If they have, during the period of inflammation and swelling, mistaken a case of Luxation or Fracture; if the hip joint or shoulder bone remain unreduced, will a copartnery of many surgeons, confident in mutual support, permit an individual, however high his reputation or acquirements, to dispute or doubt their opinion: to intrude into that family: to endanger their reputation, to cure a desperate disease and discredit their prognostics? to distinguish a dislocation, or reduce it?

Though few of their number knew the forms or properties of the shoulder or hip-joints, or the mechanism of the knee or the wrist, or could describe the bones, or name any ligament or muscle by which the bones are connected; though not one of them could pretend to any genius for mechanics, or ingenuity and talent for invention, would they feel more modestly for these disqualifying circumstances, or desist from rude and ineffectual attempts? When a gentleman has received a shot in a duel, though not one of the Copartnery ever saw a gun-shot wound, will they permit that gentleman to be visited by one who has? No, though the shoulder, hip, or knee, should be for ever stiffened; though the patient should, at the end of years of suffering, crawl from his couch an object of compassion; though a man of the finest parts and person should suffer this sad change, yet will they not relent!

Incapacity is ever cunning, and numbers are confident; and there are a thousand nameless arts, by which any change of measures may be pre-

vented, even in the most lingering case: They will no more allow a skilful surgeon to know their practice, than they will allow a skilful physician, who is not of their party, to be called to witness a patient's death. Why should they? There can always be convoked a MULTITUDINOUS UNANIMOUS CONSULTATION! to resolve on any measure which either the patient's safety, or the surgeon's immunity may require. As for the patient, let him travel to London, to Bristol, to Bath! let him lose time and strength by the journey; health, or even life, by the experiments; but a true copartner shall never LOSE HIS PATIENT, "though that his sepulchre should be the maw of kites."

All the scene is singular, and the inhabitants of a city where such combinations prevail, are most ridiculously deceived: They imagine they are calling a learned and skilful physician, when their wives, families, or servants, are under the care of an apprentice boy, and he alone is their physician, "at least in diseases NOT AT FIRST esteemed DANGEROUS;" the rest is a farce. A boy, (and he is usually not a very intelligent one, who submits himself to such a scheme of life, becomes for a certain space of years his father's or brother's apprentice, carrying bottles and parcels from door to door; at the end of which period, the eventful and ever memorable hour arrives, in which he is "to repeat by rote, answers from a sort of catechism, to questions which he never understood." Then practice is prepared for him, and he, according to the system, is prepared for practice. The College doors are opened to him, which having

passed, he must begin to run, and run for ever, the sole condition of his new and prosperous state of existence.

He then improves his knowledge of science, by innumerable and continual occasions of experience: He inoculates children for Cow-pock; attends them diligently during THAT DISEASE! prescribes Worm-powders, Blisters, Rubefacients, and Purges, and that Pectoral Linctus for conghs, so long celebrated in the shops of Edinburgh! And when thus prepared by years of experience, some precious member of society having suffered a lacerated fracture of the leg, or of the skull, he performs, for the first time, the operations of Amputation, or Trepan; or when the head of a family falls, by imperceptible degrees, "from a disease which did not, at least at first, seem of dangerous consequence," into a fever of the most malignant aspect; he prescribes with equal intrepidity, till the critical days are come, when it can no longer be concealed from his mourning family, that there remains no hope. Then the case devolves to others, the legitimate actors in the concluding scene: The subsultus tendinum is perceived, the low delirium is come on, and the physician of the Copartnery is called to grace their last acts, and prescribe the last potions which the ill-fated patient is ever destined to swallow. Well, if this concluding scene betray no appearance of collusion, or be conducted with the decencies due to the expiring father and husband of a family.

Sure, Sir, if we are to have faith in physic, and that a physician is a man truly educated, and fitted for

his duties, it were much for the benefit of the public that he were called while human counsel, learned advice could avail; that he were called in the first of a disease, to enquire about its cause, to prognosticate its natural issue, to prevent the natural dangers, and always to act uncontrouled!—It were no harm, Sir, if in this city, as in London, and other well-regulated cities, each physician of our college were called by his friends consulting in his turn those among his brethren, whom he himself accounted the most learned and able, or those who, by the public voice, were acknowledged to stand highest in reputation for sense and learning.

The gentlemen you describe so archly, and who now call the physician, do so from very humiliating motives motives; the condition of such a dealer seems hardly more honourable than that of Crook-back, so noted in the city of Paris, who having a notable and accommodating hunch, went every day into the Rue de Quincempoix, where the stock-jobbers met during the rage of Law's Mississippi scheme, where thousands were in such mischievous haste to be ruined, that they knew not how or where to be accommodated with a desk, or any thing to sign their papers upon; to each party, in due succession, this ingenious gentleman turned the gable-end of his body, while they wrote their receipts on the table-land of his capacious hunch. What a happy discovery was this in any profession, a back broad enough to bear all its burdens? By this simple invention Crook-back made his fortune amidst the ruin of thousands, and why not?



“ Cum vitia prosint peccat qui recte facit.”

There is one peculiarity of temper natural to all the members of a copartnery, the source, I fear, of much private unhappiness and unprofitable anxiety, an aversion from the toils of education, a hatred of talents,

“ A natural pique all blockheads have to brains.”

When a private society of men, whose education chiefly consists in such a slender knowledge of their profession as just enables them to pass at their examination, and even that little, learnt from a short catechism which they never understood, but only got by rote, and nine-tenths of which they may have forgotten, in the course of five, ten, or twenty years !” In a society where, though the members have learnt so little, you plainly suspect they forget a great deal, it is surely logical to infer, that jealousy must increase, in proportion as their ignorance increases ; that feelings of incapacity and insecurity must grow upon them, in proportion as they forget what (as you very metaphysically observe,) they never rightly knew.

They and the science, during this their retrograde progress, are going opposite ways, and they become vigilant and suspicious as ignorance and cunning can make them. An intolerance of learning ; a sensibility to invasion, especially the invasion of talents ; an abhorrence of those who affect superiority, though that superiority is won by the most severe labour, is to them most natural ; and the man who is convicted, or but suspected, of a love of study, or a



desire for reputation, is doomed to be the subject of all the petty scandals of "such practical philosophers," who know no loss but loss of gain, and fear nothing so much as merit in individuals, or improvement in science ! Who, when they wish to assume the imposing appearance of a SOCIETY of LITERARY MEN, confidently advertise volume after volume of books, which are never to grace the Booksellers list, nor to go further than the Newspaper ! Who, when alarmed with any new invasion of knowledge, bespeak a physician to help them to tread out any dangerous spark of reputation.

But we are insensibly talking of the office of a physician, as if it essentially belonged to the constitution of a Copartnery ! Whether such an adjunct is accidental or essential, you best can tell ; but the unfeigned pleasure I take in developing the principles of the new sect of practical philosophers, will, I trust, be received as a proof of my respect for every new institution proposed or patronized by the learned and ROMANTIC Professor of the Practice of Physic.

Upon one point only am I at a loss, viz. the numbers that may be honourably associated in such a company. We have here unfortunately no absolute fact nor written law ; we are left altogether to common sense, to analogy, or, in plain truth, to theory ; and the only theory I can imagine is, that the profession is, as fine writers use to express it, a field or a province, to be cultivated to the utmost of our power ; and, of course, the more numerous the hands, the more abundant the harvest : Or rather, the profession is as a COMMON, the property or

right of which is free to all the members of the corporation. But yet it is not altogether open or waste land; a common has its laws as well as a royal forest! You must not eat it bare! You must not turn into it beasts of all kinds, "in gross, sans nombre," without stint or limit: This amounts to the crime of Superoneratio, the Surcharging the Common, and might subject you to an action at law: You may lawfully turn into it your "black-cattle and sheep;" they are "commonable!" but you must not disturb these by putting in "hogs, or goats, or asses; these are not commonable."\*

By the bye, you have a partner!—"your mock proposal of uniting with Mr Trotter in copartnership, was not the first alarm: the profession had reason to believe that secret practices and sly doctrines of this tendency, had begun to sap the principles and education of our profession, and were, sooner or latter, to have the avowed support of the illustrious Professor Gregory." Some had actually seen your advertisements; others suspected your habits and connections; all perceived that your gratis quartos were calculated to serve the double purpose of satires and hand-bills; and though aware that you durst not actually engage in copartnery with the members of another college, yet sly connections with these, and avowed Copartneries in your own, began to bear a singular resemblance to what you had called, in

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\* Vide Judge Blackstone's Commentaries on the Law of England.

your blundering way, “ a hugger-mugger conspiracy against the lives and purses” of the simple and offending citizens.

It is wonderful, Sir, when a set of busy politicians get together and mean to be very secret and very sly, how apt they are to imagine they are so. It is equally surprising to observe, how much a metaphysician acts like a man of the world, in worldly matters; how easily his abstract notions amalgamate with the plain sense of these practical philosophers. You were not unacquainted with the practical advantages of Copartnery; you resolved to express your approbation of that new system, by your practice; You took a Partner, you advertised him, and used him in that sort; but in your advertisement, you had the honesty to declare, that this ARRANGEMENT, as you were politely pleased to term it, was made neither merely for the accommodation of the public, nor the benefit of your partner, “ but chiefly for your own.”

A profession jealous of its respectability, will be slow in admitting new principles and practices; for what is now fact only, will soon become precedent, and the actions of a disingenuous individual, may soon come to be the settled habits of the profession: And, when gainful practices, and rapacious combinations, are vindicated by custom and use, it will be vain to declaim, and impossible to reform.

“ You have a partner !” Had you taken under your protection a young physician, to proclaim his rising abilities, and bring him into public notice! Had you been visibly attached to him, from the ge-

nerous, liberal design of patronizing talents, which might be lost to the public service, and fostering them! Had you written privately to your friends, as Bellario writes of Portia, "I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation, for I never knew so young a body with so old a head!" Had you requested those, who could not benefit by your advice, to accept of his, and sought to forward his reputation with honest, generous zeal, who would not have applauded your sentiments? But to hire a YOUNG PHYSICIAN as your PARTNER! To ADVERTISE him as YOUR PARTNER! to distinguish his entry upon the stage of public life, by an act unworthy and unprecedented: to exhibit him in a station fit only to bring genius and learning into contempt! Sir, it was a reward for learning and a station for genius, such as none but a metaphysician of your own school could have contrived. It requires an established character to withstand your enmities and scurrilities; it will require a stronger, I believe, to resist the contagion of your company, and the disgrace of your patronage.

These, then, are the practices which you, a volunteer lecturer, and now a veteran declaimer about MORAL CAUSES, hold forth for the imitation of the rising members of our profession. You would fain substitute, I perceive, your own strange example, at once, for all law, honour, and principle: But notwithstanding your high station and presumed authority, you must pardon me if I recur to the natural constitution of our profession for the decision of



this great practical problem, which your single authority can never resolve.

“ May a physician, consistently with honour or principle, keep a partner ? ” I am not deeply read, Sir, in the annals of the medical trade ; nor ever before had occasion to distinguish the “ enlightened minds which do honour to medical science, from the uninstructed mob who follow the medical trade ; ” but had copartneries prevailed in the times of science, and among men of learning, I should have had some recollection of the fact. Tissot, and Morton, and Sydenham, and Hoffman, Van Swieten, and Boerhaave, Cullen, and Monro, Hunter and Baker, and Baillie, were (and some of them still remain to the public) extraordinary men ; men of great and various powers of mind, cultivating science, and performing at the same time the duties of practice. They lived in the most populous cities of Europe, the most esteemed physicians, performed their duties up to extreme old age, and the claims of the public survived their natural powers.

If these men, oppressed as they were at once with the duties of science and of practice, had partners, their secret has never been betrayed. If you imagine that I mean to overshadow you with great names, vindicate yourself then by more applicable authorities ! name the physician, of high or low degree, in this or in any age, so base as to have a partner, so indelicate as to advertise one.

The person of a Prince, or the vote of a Peer, may be represented by commission ; these are trivial proxies, for trivial purposes. But the intellect of a



physician, the opinion of a physician ! cannot appear in proxy, till the time arrives, when an opinion, decisive of life or death, is as little valued as a political vote. Thank God, Sir, the plain inviolable principles of our profession are not yet prostituted to this degree. A physician is honoured for his genius, learning, and experience ; his fees are given him on the faith of his genius, learning, and experience, being most truly devoted, for the time, to his patient, to the person whose faith is such as to constitute him arbiter of all other opinions, where his own health, perhaps his life, are in question.

By the constitution of our profession, and the consent and understanding of the world, certain rewards are annexed to certain painful acts of professional duty.—They are the rewards for that long period passed in anxious study ; for that self-denial which a physician must continually practise ; for those distressing scenes in which he must be frequently involved ; and for the solitude in which he is obliged to spend many of his hours, reflecting on the disorders of patients in distant parts, who are waiting anxiously for his advice.

By the constitution of our profession, a physician receives prompt and liberal remuneration, that he may reserve his hours for serious deliberation, his whole mind for the investigation of difficult points ; and preserve his temper and affections clear and unperturbed.

The constitution of our profession requires that he should stand clear of all the vexations of practice, and the details of trade ; no way subject to its vicis-

situdes, jealous distractions or quarrels : That he should for ever preserve his dignity and independence, pure and unsuspected : That he should declare enmity to no man, profess gratitude to no man, but hold his practice from the public as a reward for his deep studies and respectable conduct, “*quamdiu se bene gesserit*,” as his undoubted right ; not *durante bene placito* of any human being : That he should hold his practice in dignity and independence, after having with labour and toil “*climbed to the vantage ground of science*,” sincerely contemning the mean and gainful application to the little arts of chicanerie.

Can it be, that a physician is entitled to delegate these sacred duties ? I can tell you, Sir, what my feelings should be as a patient confiding in any physician, and buying his opinion at a price as high as “*skilled labour*” can deserve ; at a price which, perhaps, I can ill afford ; which nothing but generous and grateful dispositions prompt me to give, and which he is almost ashamed to receive. I have, Sir, a property, for the time, in that physician ; an undoubted right to inquire, whether those acts of professional duty are faithfully performed ; with what diligence he studies my memorial, applies his whole soul to seek out means of relief and cure ? To inquire whether he delivers over a part of this duty, or the whole, to some deputy, in whose skill I have no confidence, who is unknown to me, who is inferior in learning as in years, to many of the same profession, my old and respected friends ? To delegate so sacred a duty without my consent, is one of those secret crimes which it is difficult to discover, and

should, for that cause, be most curiously investigated. “Ea sunt animadvertenda peccata maxime, quæ difficillime præcaventur.”

Learn, Sir, that every public man, every professor especially of a useful art, is an indented servant of the public: He is not master of his own actions, nor even proprietor of his life, the fee-simple of which is due to society; and if he take it away with his own hand; if, through cowardice or weariness of life, he abandon his duties, he is buried with the burial of a felon, a stake driven through his body, and a memorial set up of his crime and his infamy. Nor is he master of his talents, nor absolute in the use he makes of them: Every man is debtor in his best faculties and exertions to that public which he professes to serve; “A debt (as an ingenious moralist observes) always paying, never discharged.”\*

The man who delegates even so trifling a right as that of a political vote, far from delegating the entire power of thinking, judging, or resolving, does, by this very act, circumscribe that power, and limits his proxy to a specific vote. I believe, Sir, in common sense it will be acknowledged, how it may be in your metaphysics I know not, that to delegate a person to think and consult, would be about as nugatory as to appoint a proxy to breathe for us, or to perform any other natural function. Then, Sir, by a plain inference, he who delegates another to con-

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\* Godwyn, p. 351.

sult for him, declares an incapacity of some nature, and totally substitutes that second judgment to his own ! takes off the authentic stamp, and spoils the currency of that paper which he entitles a consultation, and by a sort of fraud, subscribes with his name ! He plainly by such act declares, that his time is occupied, his senses hurried, his mind disturbed, his peace and serenity too often invaded by angry passions, to allow him to fulfil the best duties of his profession.

When a physician, having once received from me a token of my confidence, and accepted it ; when, being virtually bound to me, he does not return back into my own hands, that act of confidence entire, to transfer it as my affections or judgment may direct ; but, of his own authority, proceeds to delegate the consideration of my disorder to another ; to one unknown to me at the least, perhaps incapable, surely inferior in years, experience, and learning, to many of my old confidential friends ; when, after this insult to my understanding, this violence to my best feelings, he tells me, in a *HAND-BILL*, that he has done this ! let him give the act what name he pleases, it is, in the language of plain unsophisticated reason, a *VERY FRAUD*.

Abandon, Sir, for a moment, that subtle casuistry which has habitual influence over your actions ; compare the thing you have done with the usage of your profession, or the principles of your father : Or question those friends, who have never dared spontaneously to advise you, and you will surely find, that your injustice to the world has this complexion.



But your offences against your profession are of a deeper die: Your practices, Sir, are discouraging to genius, incompatible with study, and fatal to the best hopes of those who now cultivate the profession: Of those, especially, who are at this moment entering upon it, with vain and visionary expectations of rising by diligence and genius to some conspicuous rank, expectations never to be realised! How very little do they know the world and its ways?

“Ye imps of fame approach, ye lads of spirit,  
Who think to storm the world by dint of merit.”

Look to the scene now exhibited in this city! see what our professor of physic prints, and practises! How well and experimentally he has proved, that “medical facts are lies, and the reasoning and theories of our science, stark nonsense; “that of our pretended remedies, ninety-nine of the hundred are useless; that our affectation of sympathy, when a patient dies, is but the simple wailings and whining of “Novices;”—who ought, in place of such pretensions to say, “Have we not seen Pharsalia?” and go on labouring for daily bread, “the guineas, the guineas!” for gaining which the prattle of a London apothecary, (and he should have added, in justice to his best friends, “the arts of a copartnery,”) “are more availing than all the science of all the Colleges of Europe.”\*

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\* Vide Censorian Letter.



The influence of your praetices, on the education and character of the rising generation, is every way mortifying. A man cannot become learned nor skilful in our profession by chance, or suddenly : A science like medicine, requires years of unremitting study, and through those years the candidate must be supported by hope ; the rewards of his profession must be secured to him ; the hope at least of public applause, approbation, and esteem. But, what man will look forward with confidence, or labour for twenty years, saddening, with severe and anxious study, the happiest hours of his life ; or indulge the fantastic hope, of entering at mature years, and with a prepared mind, into competition for public favour, who knows, that his promised station is preoccupied, and all access to the profession barred, by the partners of Surgeons and Physicians, in endless succession. Public esteem ! learning, and independence ! let him cultivate no such esteem ; or, if he do, let it be the esteem of some well employed Doctor, who has a trade ; there let him go, and “ there crook the pregnant hinges of the knee, where thrift may follow fawning.”

In many a useful trade, and even in many a high and respected profession, honour, honesty, and fair dealing, alone are required ; these, alone, are precious to the public, and talents useful merely to the individual himself. The banker, broker, merchant, farmer, seek no other professional character but that of probity ; no higher recommendation, than a fair reputation for honourable dealing and good faith. But in a public character, in a statesman, lawyer, physi-

cian, not only honesty, but talents are required; of which the public have no other assurance, but by time spent in diligent preparation and study. But no such preparation can be expected, if you and your politics are allowed to prevail; for they are discouraging to genius, and calculated to interrupt the rewards of learning, and defeat the hopes of those who found their hope of success on professional excellence: To this, the policy of copartneries is deadly.

One example of the injustice of your practice, infers a thousand; “*multis minatur, qui uni facit injuriam.*” Dr *Monro* is a physician, long and justly respected in this city, and eminently skilled in the structure of the human body: Take to yourself twenty such partners as you are likely to procure, and you will not among you make up the moiety of his skill. By what principle then do you take upon you to interpose a young, an unknown person, with the most degrading of all denominations, that of your partner, betwixt the public and Dr *Monro*, and intercept the just rewards of a gentleman, whose experience began before you were craddled, and long before your partner was born.

Thus do you depreciate tried abilities, and deprive the public of the ripest talents! The services of the most distinguished men are pushed aside, to make way for one who, if he come not, like yourself, through the *SHOP*, may well be said, in your politer phrase, to descend *THROUGH* the *CHIMNEY*, or *RISE* through a less delicate entrance!

When Dr Gregory is too deeply involved to preserve his composure, or fulfil his duties, have we not numbers of skilful physicians, to whom consultations, unwarily addressed to him, would be devolved, were all the truth laid open? Dr Monro, Dr Rutherford, Dr Hamilton, Dr Stewart, Dr Home, have not complaisantly departed this life to make way for the new principles of copartnery, or the new members of that affiliated society: What avail their skill and science, their long experience, their unimpeached morals, and their habits strictly professional? What avail their gentleman-like retirement from the scene of your intrigues, their silence on the affairs of the hospital, their abhorrence of your untruths, their contempt of your libels? You interpose betwixt them and the public, and without any such request on the part of your patients, a physician three years a member of the Royal College, your ADVERTISED PARTNER and your CLERK!—The oldest and most respected physicians in this city superseded, to make way for the Umbra of Dr Gregory!

From you the profession have learnt nothing in points of science, nor directly in point of morals; but indirectly, there has not appeared a more exemplary teacher of all that the profession should fear, or a physician and a man of honour avoid. You have ensured, beyond a doubt, your present reputation, and your posthumous fame; you have made yourself a text for all tongues, and a warning for all ages.

This desire of consultations, and indelicacy in advertisements, were conspicuous in your earliest pro-

duction. You told us, in your first Memorial, how numerous the consultations, 600, that had gone through your hands ! Excellent,—gone “ through your hands.” Your trade was then beginning, not fairly begun : You had as yet got no partner, nor advertised double consultations for single fees : You had but ventured delicately to praise the wares you were soon to advertize.

“ *Laudant vanales qui vult extrudere merces.*”

A hand-bill of a less delicate complexion than yours, never was thrust into the hands of a credulous mob : And even the motives which usually lead to public invitations of this nature were no way concealed.

FIRST, Sir, being conscious of an act without a precedent, and that you were doing at once a dishonour to your profession, and an injustice to those to whom such sort of consultations were addressed : You acknowledged in this circular paper the breach of principle of which you were guilty, and deprecated the indignation, “ displeasure and surprize,” which it must excite, in these remarkable expressions : “ A person who asks the advice of only ONE PHYSICIAN, must no doubt be surprised, and perhaps displeased, at receiving the advice of two. It is therefore necessary to explain the reason of such a SINGULAR DEVIATION FROM THE COMMON PRACTICE OF MY PROFESSION.”

Be assured, Sir, that every man, however careful,

just or generous, his conduct, will, in the course of a busy life, fall into accidental deviations, which occasion him uneasiness, and require apologies to his best friends. But wilful deviations, of a “singular nature, from the common practice of a profession,” are neither dignified nor prudent: Strong measures are usually dictated by keen interests! But in these the public has no sympathy; and public apologies for deliberate deviations, are not often successful: I shall not wonder if yours continue for ever to excite “displeasure and surprise.”

Well,—But you proceed, in the SECOND place, to explain the REASONS of this “singular deviation:” If, by explaining the reasons, (which is not over correct in point of expression) you mean to say that you proceed to EXPLAIN THE MOTIVES of such singular deviations, I believe you might have saved your unsuspecting patients the pain of reading a long vindication, and have safely struck out all that is intermediate betwixt the peroration which I have just quoted, and the conclusion of this laborious handbill: You might have just at once said what you say in the end, “this ARRANGEMENT is made, not only for the benefit of patients, but ALSO for OUR OWN! and CHIEFLY FOR MINE!” A more confused superfluous piece of information could hardly be imagined! but it is explicit and ingenuous, as becomes a great professor;—would to God all handbills had so fair and honest a conclusion, “also for our benefits, and chiefly for mine.” This, as a metaphysician must perfectly comprehend, is the FINAL CAUSE of EVERY such public address.



THIRDLY, You profess in your "scheme (I mean, Sir, your mock advertisement, not this real one,) for extending and increasing the practice of medicine in this city," to write things short and pithy, such as the BEST MEDICAL ADVICE ON THE LOWEST TERMS;\* it is with regret I find you deviating from so wise a resolution, to which, if you had had the constancy to adhere, this your true advertisement might have been a very model for all future composers. It is the maxim of wise and discreet men, ministers, politicians, and judges, (not Scotch judges) to make NONE but SHORT and PITHY DECLARATIONS: The reasons, they prudently reserve, well aware that every man who likes their short and pithy declarations, will find out reasons for himself, more pleasant and satisfactory than any they could assign. You also might safely, and wisely too, have struck out all the intermediate reasoning, which but enfeebles this short and pithy declaration; for, to the best of my apprehension, it is a long and tedious averment of want of time for these professional duties, "that the time required to write a proper opinion and advice in one case, was more than you could command in several days."

Really, Sir, if any unhappy and credulous person should feel that he is suffering from such delay, I could excuse him making the same reply with the poor widow, who, having presented an earnest petition on her knees to a tyrant, he threw it back to her saying, "I have no time for it:" She rose up, and

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\* Vide Censorian Letter, p. 136.

spoke thus to him : " If you have not time to be a king, then give over being a king."

FOURTH, " Independently (you say) of the time required to consider many of the cases sent to me for my opinion, the time often required to write, whether with my own hand, or by dictating to a secretary (as had been long my practice) A PROPER OPINION and ADVICE, in ONE CASE, was more than I could command from the more URGENT CALLS OF PROFESSIONAL DUTY IN SEVERAL DAYS!"

Urgent calls of professional duty ! Can you, Sir, expect to play the hypocrite thus openly, and yet escape detection ? Have you been engaged in nothing but professional duty ? Have you performed any professional duty but that which you could not avoid ? Is contention and scandal of this description ? Have you not this moment completed a diligent compilation of low jests to amuse the public, to traduce your rivals, to bring the Royal College of Physicians into contempt, and so increase your own practice ? Does not this volume of ribaldry amount to one thousand quarto pages ? Have you ceased one moment for ten years, to vex society and traduce your brethren ? Have you ever felt an irritation you did not indulge, conceived an enmity you have not proclaimed, or envied a reputation you have not contrived to traduce ? Away with a tale about " urgent calls," and " professional duty," while these have been the occupations of your heart.

FIFTH, " The consequence (you next tell us) has been, that for a LONG TIME you have BEEN IN AR-REAR of PROFESSIONAL WRITING ! and that in the

course of the last three months that arrear has gradually increased upon you." And, Sir, did this arrear increase upon you for three months? Did you continue thus long, in a manner dangerous to your whole system of life, to receive the fees, and abuse the confidence of the public, without one compunctious visiting of nature? The scenes described in those letters, which you have thus neglected, are scenes of suffering, though not scenes of blood.—Did no small still voice tell you, that there were occupations in which your intellects were entangled, which, while they created the worst of incapacities, and involved a deep injustice to the public, were training you on to ruin and disgrace: That while your duties were thus neglected, your worst passions were indulged? You had been "long in arrears of professional writing:" Had you ever, during a course of years, been in arrear of scandal and defamation?

It would have been well, Sir, while all public situations and professional occupations were secured to the Copartnery of your friends, and to your own Copartnery, you had left the public judgment uncorrupted. But every year has been distinguished by some polemical triumph: One by a volume of scandal against Dr Hamilton! one by a volume of scurrility against Mr John Bell and the younger surgeons! one by a volume against Mr John Bell solely, the rival of your learned copartnery of surgeons, whose reputation seemed to excite your malice, and (you will be grieved to think) survived it! one against the College of Physicians, under the title of a Censorian Letter!

and one making open war this day against the honour, integrity, and reputation, of the whole College, and its most respected members !

When it is recollected that those have all, according to the liberal and generous bent of Dr Gregory's nature, been GRATIS PUBLICATIONS, not sold in shops, but distributed through private channels: That this same HAND-BILL, which we are now discussing, was naturally accompanied with these delicate presents: That the hand-bill must have had the happy effect of announcing DOUBLE CONSULTATIONS FOR SINGLE FEES; while the quarto demonstrated to the world, that John Bell, the rival of the copartnery of Surgeons, and all the younger members of the Royal College, rivals of the Copartnery of Physicians, were unworthy of any professional charge ; were men destitute of talents, honour, or good faith : When this is considered, it will, I believe, be acknowledged, that " the scheme for the farther extension of medical practice in this city," has been carried to its highest perfection, at the moment when medical science has sunk to its lowest ebb.

A physician, Sir, it is alleged, too often contributes, by his practice, to fulfil his worst prognostications: You seem to me, by your policy, to have accomplished a prophecy, the fulfilment of which you once affected to deprecate.\* " I heard a surmise, (you never are inattentive to surmises, reports, anecdotes, &c., when they are worth knowing) I heard a surmise (you say) that the proposed change in our

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\* Vide Censorian Letter, p. 67.

law might lead to an association OR KIND of CO-PARTNERY of PHYSICIANS with SURGEON-APOTHECARIES, in this way: Some of the older surgeons, when unable any longer to act as Surgeons, become Physicians and Fellows of our College, still preserving their former connections in practice, both with their patients, and with their younger partners as Surgeons. It is evident that such a HUGGER-MUGGER CONSPIRACY against the lives and purses of the good people of this good town, would be not only practicable, but easy; ONE or TWO of the SENIOR PARTNERS, or CONSPIRATORS, PLAYING THE PHYSICIAN, while some of the juniors played the Surgeon, and old and young equally played the Apothecary."

Heaven alone knows, Sir, what is "practicable;" but every thing seems "easy" to a man of real genius, for the matters he takes in hand: And though your late friend Mr Benjamin Bell, (he is the only Surgeon I ever knew in this city that had copartners,) if he had really completed this scheme, would have made manifest a hugger-mugger conspiracy, and a very unseemly one: Yet the thing, when gone about the proper way, by slow progressive steps, and well composed advertisements, is not so very offensive. Nay, there are some people who take a malicious kind of pleasure, in believing that this thoughtless rash protest of yours was taken off by a compromise: That the hugger-mugger conspiracy, begun upon a limited plan, was completed upon a liberal and comprehensive scale, by the original inventors: And, in describing the cabinet consultations which



led to the ultimate ARRANGEMENT, they are so malicious as repeat the pleasant lines of our discontented sullen bard, who was so inventive of odious comparisons :

“How curious to contemplate two such rooks  
 Studious their nests to feather in a trice,  
 With all the necromancies of their art,  
 Playing the game of faces on each other.”\*

Always there is, in what you tell about yourself, something ludicrous, something incredible. The complexity of difficulties in which you affect, in this HAND-BILL, to be involved, is such as must defy all the ordinary processes of arithmetic to resolve. *First*, “independently of the time required to consider many of the cases sent to you for your opinion, the time required to write a proper opinion on ONE CASE, was more than you could command from the urgent calls of professional duty IN SEVERAL DAYS.” *Second*, “You often received several such letters and cases in ONE DAY, perhaps more than you could answer PROPERLY IN TEN!” *Third*, “You were not at liberty to answer these letters in the order in which they were received, being obliged to answer the most urgent of them, in preference to the LEAST URGENT.” *Fourth*, These delays and inconveniences have often been much ENCREASED by your being called to distant visits in the country, implying necessarily an ABSENCE of SEVERAL DAYS!”

You are on these grounds very clamorous for pity and sympathy, though, in my poor opinion, there are

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\* Young's Complaint.

other parties far better entitled to our commiseration. Yet your case is pitiable: For, if I am able to arrive, by vulgar arithmetic, to any thing like an equation of your perplexities, they must be endless: not even the rash expedient you have fallen upon can extricate you. The several items in your arrears must, in order to be intelligible, be resolved into distinct propositions; and the three memorable months of total arrears which preceded your HAND-BILL, may be stated as the extreme case.

*Proposition 1st.*—Every day produces THREE such afflicting letters: The average is low. You say you sometimes receive several such letters and cases in one day, perhaps more than you could answer properly in ten.” I wish there may not be some equivocate in this word PROPERLY: but, however,—betwixt the number of TEN letters and NONE, we may safely state THREE DAILY LETTERS. While you receive three letters in one day, you often cannot command time to reply to one letter in SEVERAL DAYS: if you receive three letters in one day, and answer but one in three days, in three days there is an accumulation of EIGHT LETTERS, one only being answered

*Proposition 2d.*—In a month of thirty days, eighty letters have accumulated; and in three months, the accumulation in this simple ratio amounts to two hundred and forty letters, independent of these irregularities arising from your occasional absence from town, and your other distractions. Indeed, I should not insult you by mentioning this among the causes

of accumulation which it influences so very slightly ; for though you were not merely distracted, but altogether incapacitated, there would be only one letter in three days affected by this public misfortune. I am indeed surprised, seeing that the accumulation is at the rate of nine letters in three days, while you are replying only to one,—that you never thought of absenting yourself altogether from this knee-deep dunghill of human miseries.

*Proposition 3d.*—The accumulation of letters during three months being TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY ! the annual accumulation is NINE HUNDRED AND SIXTY ! and the ratio of letters dispatched and replied to, or somehow disposed of, to the neglected letters, is as nine hundred and sixty to one hundred and twenty !!! This is indeed lamentable ; and there is no wonder that you abandoned your intention of writing nothing but what was “ short and pithy,” to the dutiful and becoming task of reconciling those who had entrusted you with such important matter, to this your *conte rendu*. The state of the *central bureau* of ALL THE COPARTNERIES, must indeed have appeared deplorable ; but when, with physicians, statesmen, financiers, or any other responsible class of men, matters have gone so far wrong, as to require an appeal to the public, it is seldom well received.

I myself, Sir, (and I hope I have some judgment in those matters) am so little satisfied either with your ARGUMENTS, or your ARRANGEMENTS, that I confess myself “ no doubt surprized, and perhaps displeased,” and certainly should never send on such

an errand for a Consultation, I mean to an office whence, "in place of the advice of one physician," I were in danger of receiving a bit of paper, SIGNED BY TWO, and a verbose unmeaning apology, for such a "singular deviation from the common practice of my profession."

Indeed, Sir, when I deliberately consider the causes you have assigned, and the causes you have not assigned, for your arrears of professional writing; when I set myself to imagine the many occasions of confusion and perplexity, which must environ and distract you! urgent cases, fretful cases, insignificant cases, hypocondriacal cases! When I reflect on the bad spelling, crooked writing, (which, by the bye, you do not do yourself the justice to enumerate among the causes of delay,) and the ignorance of country patients, and country surgeons, the affair seems quite desperate,—quite irremediable.

"Irremediable!" Yes, Sir, I fear so: Your invention of a copartnery of physicians is indeed admirable, but by no means equal to the emergency, as you will yourself perceive, upon considering this proposition.

*Proposition 4th.*—The copartnery opens quite bankrupt! with the inauspicious accumulation of three months of arrears! And the new firm looks, as if it were designed merely to make the affairs of the old look well in the face. The accumulation, by the data you have yourself assigned, is two hundred and forty letters. When the new copartnery begins to clear this off, there is a permanent, and probably (by the institution of the copartnery,) an encreasing

demand for their articles : The minimum of this demand and accumulation is eighty letters a month ! Now, though it were possible, in some sort of way, to clear off, in the space of three months, an hundred and sixty of these, there would be in the meanwhile, another heavy surge following, of one hundred and sixty unanswered letters.

Though the newly assumed partner were all at once inspired with all the enthusiasm, and all the practical skill, of hitting off what might by courtesy be called Consultations, he can hardly be expected to excel the Principal in dexterity : You often are unable “ to write a PROPER opinion and advice in several days,” while he must be able to write, besides a share of the old arrear, his SEVEN letters, containing PROPER OPINIONS AND ADVICES, in three days. Sir, this is sore work, and reminds me of what Johnson once, in a pettish humour, said to Sir Joshua Reynolds : “ I wonder how much you and I could make in a week, if we were to work as hard as ever we could.”

One of two consequences must flow from this scene of perplexity, constituting, what I think you call a Dilemma : Either your partner, who works along with you, writing double consultations for single fees, must be able to do the work of eight Dr Gregorys ; viz. all the accumulated letters, and seven-eighths of the current letters ; a thing very far, I should suppose, from being consolatory to “ those who, having asked for the advice of only one physician, receive that of two.” Or, there is work for more than eight able-bodied hard-working physicians or



METAPHYSICIANS, (which I suppose, from the analysis of the Greek term, means something put along with a physieian, to eke out his importance,) supposing the said eight metaphysicians, never individually nor corporately, to write one page of scandal or obscenity, prosaical or poetical, nor think, about either physies or metaphysics, but to work hard, as Johnson said, for "DAILY BREAD." I thank you for the word, Sir, it is a delicate phrase, when rightly applied, "DAILY BREAD."

We are sure of commanding sympathy, when we can prevail with others to enter eandidly into the history of our distresses; and your perplexities have interested me so truly in your behalf, that I have considered them in every possible light, moral, political, and religious. And I honestly declare they exceed what your HAND-BILL expresses. That you every way need assistance, it would be most inhuman to deny; indeed, the thing I most admire, is your heroism and constaney in struggling with difficulties, so far beyond human strength, that when I think of the whole praetice of this city and country, filtering gradually and imperceptibly through the partieles of eopartneries, triekling as it goes along its innumerable rills, and gently solicited onwards through the channels provided for it, and then bursting all in one great flood through this last lowest sluice! why, Sir, it seems to me irresistible. Two solitary studious metaphysicians! You might as well persuade us, that a great burst and breach having taken place in the dykes of Walcheren, which laid all the island under water, and drowned the people, Lord Chatham, and his

aids-de-camp, had set themselves down in the gap, and fallen to paddling and plastering it up like two beavers, with their tails and the paws.

I confess my surprise and disappointment, on discovering, that though the HAND-BILL was printed, the consultation was not. I always feel regret when an invention, truly ingenious, is left imperfect, from hurry or any such cause. Like many of those who take out patents for a discovery, you have been in haste, just to announce the PRINCIPLE, and secure the benefit of the invention, even before you have brought it to perfection: But you have all the conception very perfect in your mind, and the mechanism you will improve by slow degrees. I do not despair of seeing the CONSULTATION FORMS, and PROPER DIRECTIONS, printed, so as to avoid delays or errors, with BLANKS for the parties and their diseases, and STAMPS for the names.

Yet certainly there is some fatality attending your best intentions, since so rare and ingenious a contrivance as this proves so manifestly inadequate to its purposes. I fear you have among you, neglected some religious ceremony, or needful conjuration, which might have propitiated the powers that presided over Copartneries. I would suggest to you, that at the next consultation in which there is assembled a competent number of those devoted to your new and enlightened principles; you should all consent in reciting, hand in hand, the prayer of Puff's tragedy, which may serve until the poet of the "epigrams," shall have leisure to compose a more regular  
ODE TO APOLLO.

## PRAYER TO APOLLO.

“ Behold thy votaries submissive beg,  
That thou wilt deign to grant them all they ask,  
Assist them to accomplish all their ends,  
And sanctify whatever means they use,—to gain them.”

“ Bravo! A very orthodox Quintetto.”

## LETTER XVII.

The Science and Mystery of Trade and Copartnery farther explained : The admirable Metaphysical Discovery of separating the quality, or accident REPUTATION, from the Substratum TALENT, and that so subtilely as to leave not the smallest suspicion of the substance and the quality having any essential connection. This doctrine exemplified in practice ; the substantial TALENT left at home, with the individual Possessor ; while the quality REPUTATION, spread out thin and transparent over certain substances, is divided into vendible portions, and sent abroad over all the parts of a city, to bring home gain.

These Principles illustrated by various Hypotheses : By a great Copartnery at Charing Cross ; a splendid Revolution in St George's Hospital ; and by a Reform in the honourable profession of the Law.

The Consultations of Copartneries always Multitudinons, always Unanimous ! And to be procured at a moment's warning, when any thing " goes Wrong that should go right ;" when " a Medicine comes Up which should go Down ;" or when " a Patient who was expected to live, is preparing to die."

Of the Art of giving to a Copartnery of Trading Surgeons the Aspect of a Society of Literary Men, preparing and publishing Learned Works continually ; which Art consists merely in ADVERTISING BOOKS. The reader is presented with some useful Specimens.

THIS, Sir, is the system you patronise, and this shall be my text.

The violated principles of my profession seem to me a cause worthy of every sacrifice, and in that cause I risk the obloquy, the assured malice, the

open and the secret machinations, of you and your retainers.

Our profession is endangered; its education and morals deeply affected by your conduct: "But we owe it to the bounty of Providence, that the completest depravity of heart is sometimes strangely united with a confusion of the mind, which counteracts and betrays the most favourite principles."\*

After a long course of pious dissimulation, in which you tenderly bewailed the sufferings of the poor, while your charities served to hide your selfish purposes, and your enmity against younger surgeons allied you in close amity with those who could promote your practice. After a still longer period of open warfare against the reputation of the most respectable members of your own College, you have brought the merits of your plan of life, in direct opposition with that of a whole profession, and have declared your principles by your writings and your practice. Your writings are all libels; your practice founded on your Connections; your Connections are visibly such as could have no attraction for you as a man of science, a scholar, or an accomplished gentleman: They are exactly those which are plainly interdicted in the writings of your father, whose precepts, though of an antiquated cast, should have prevented your risking your reputation on such foul play.

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\* Junius, Letter 15.



But your circumstances were unhappy: You found it difficult, with the reputation of a philosopher clinging and clogging about you, to become an active bustling physician. You wisely yielded yourself up to the necessities of your situation, and united yourself in close council with that sure friend, whom you so preserveringly commended as one to whom you owed infinite obligations: and though your wisdom then directed you to anoint his son, your well informed infirmity clerk, with the drop-pings of this incense, you calculated with seeming certainty on the first of the two lives.

Then you declaimed, with wonderful volubility, against the younger surgeons, little reflecting what a change a few years might produce. Your favourite friend hardly survived your encomiums, and left you to support, with your singular talents, the rabble of the younger members of the coalition, which he bequeathed to you. The best piece in your board is gone: You have lost your Rook, but your Pands remain, and you may protract the game: Your men at arms have fallen, but you have still a thick army of lacqueys and retainers, pillagers of the field.

Unrestrained enquiry into the talents, accomplishments, morals, or conduct, of professional men, their connections or means of success, interesting as such free inquiry must be to the world, can seldom be allowed. Men of every profession are restrained from this, by feelings of partiality, delicacy, and natural goodness! by the apprehension of being suspected of selfish motives, the doubt of doing good, the

fear of causing distress. But you have been at pains to break off all restraints, to challenge enquiry, and provoke retaliation. The question is not now about individuals, but about the most essential points, the morals, the education, and habits, of our profession. I am nothing to the public, nor Spence, nor Hope, nor Duncan, Rutherford, Monro, nor any who now suffer under your calumny, or feel for your degradation: But if I mistake not, you and your system, and all that is connected with you, are of importance to all future generations. Were I on my death-bed, dictating measures of prudence to the members of my profession, and to my fellow-citizens, my chief injunction should be, to disregard the foul calumnies of Dr Gregory, and suspect his practices.

Let me recal to your mind these convictions, which my reasoning could not fail to impress, in spite of that resistance which native pride and confidence could not fail to excite against me. A physician is not now, what once he was, a gentleman devoted to his profession, living in dignified retirement and study, reflecting on his arduous duties, acting on all his public questions with modesty, and judging with candour. He is no longer ashamed to cultivate those connections which are supposed to tarnish his honour; nor careful to moderate his gratitude for the support and favour of the lower members of our profession; nor anxious to conceal those returns, which all “who are concerned for the honour of medicine must reflect on with indignation.” No longer is this umpire of discordant opinions, bound to preserve that prudent gentlemanly impartiality

in professional quarrels which is so essential to the right performance of his duties ! No, Sir, according to your system, the physician of a party is the champion of a party : His talents are to be directed, not to the improvement of science, but to guard the practice of his associates : To avenge their imaginary injuries, to gratify their malice. But be assured, Sir, that when a physician, no longer careful to train his mind to his profession, and to consecrate his time to its duties, enters without delicacy or reserve into the Trade of Copartneries, the Cabals of Infirmaries, and the propagation of calumny, his mind is ruined, and his reputation and usefulness at an end.

These are the fatal influences of your system on your own branch of the profession ; on ours, less liberally educated, and less naturally called upon for seclusion and study, the effect is altogether ruinous. No man will for twenty years devote himself to study, who is conscious that his fortune in life depends on his rushing at once into practice. A surgeon will not, after being trained to liberal studies, devote himself still for many years to dissection, studying the structure of the human body, advancing deliberately in all his investigations, and reflecting on those cases in which he is first consulted, so as to become, by slow degrees, sagacious in distinguishing all the variety of diseases, and bold and dexterous in his dissections on the living body. He knows that no pre-eminence of this nature will ensure him practice ; that connections in the trade are alone required ; that the admission to a copartnery is his

only chance of ever being employ'd ! From the date of his apprenticeship, when first occupied in the labours of the mortar, he finds no other art essential to success than simple diligence in the mechanical labours : He studies not his science, but his master's humours, with every mean and servile obeisance : Early and late he is occupied in compounding or in carrying drugs : He sees no patient ; prescribes for no diseases ; is grudged the pittance of time required for the usual routine of study ; and he has before him the example of one who hates learning, and who is busied in a trade that scarcely seems to require it. Whether he is the apprentice, brother, or son, or needy dependant of such a master, he is taught, the moment he has done with carrying drugs, to course the streets, and call it practice !

From the first hour of his apprenticeship, to the moment of his death, I defy the most ingenious apologist for such a trading surgeon, to name one moment of his existence, in which he could devote himself to study ; or in which a thing so uninstructed in the principles of our science, could obtain EXPERIENCE ! Sir, experience requires previous education, a mind thoroughly prepared by an acquaintance with the accumulated knowledge of past ages, and with the present state of our science. A man who, having studied with diligence, and proceeded by slow and gradual steps, to learn the application of those principles in actual practice, may, in riper years, be said to have experience : But dare you, Sir, deliberately maintain, that this high title of an experi-



enced and able physician, can, at any period of life, be justly applied to the thing that, beginning to run his race of practice at two-and-twenty years of age, offers himself at surgeons-hall with feelings very unlike a man of education, and answers, with hesitation and faltering, some common-place questions, about the Circulation of the Blood, the Contents of the Abdomen, and the Coats of the Eye! Incapable, at that critical moment, (schooled as he has been) of reading one sentence of the language in which the Pharmacopœia, the book of common shop receipts, is composed? Dare you, Sir, maintain, that such a being, though by courtesy, and, indeed, by law, received as surgeon; and, by occupation, as you remark, “ONE OF THE ORDINARY PHYSICIANS OF THIS CITY, at least in diseases not at first esteemed of a dangerous nature,” is either an accomplished gentleman, fit to sustain the character of our profession, or an able physician, or likely to become so by experience?

A man is no more capable of becoming a surgeon by submitting to the drudgeries of a shop, nor a physician by fulfilling the prescribed rules of a university, than of coming out from the High School of Edinburgh, a finished scholar. It is the after studies that give him a claim to distinction; it is the enthusiastic, devoted, and continued application of a rational man, to that study in which he is resolved to excel, that gives this claim of experience! If running be experience, if flattery and cajoling be experience, if the officiousness, loquacity, and ignorance of a nurse, be preparations for attaining experience; if it be ex-



perience to witness a noisy, bustling, politic physician, writing a hurried prescription, daily repeated till it becomes the jest of shop-boys, or blundering out a rash sentence of death, be experience ; if it be experience to be acquainted with the arts of malignity and defamation, to fetch and carry the scandals that are to adorn the volumes of the pamphleteering physician ; then, indeed, such a man may be very deeply schooled before he is far advanced in life ; and the profession and the city owe endless acknowledgements to Dr James Gregory, the most voluminous calumniator that ever yet found profit or pleasure in the trade ; the companion of copartneries ; the eulogist of the fathers, sons, and assistants, in the medical trade of this city, through all the equivocal generations of which, not a maggot crawls abroad but feels the fostering rays of that Sun of Science.

I doubt not you begin to perceive that I am blundering after your own manner, in confounding two subjects so distinct from each other as EDUCATION and COPARTNERIES ; and you will exult in my confusion of thoughts, so like that of which you have been so long suspected ; but I hope to redeem your opinion, and correct my momentary error, by speaking henceforth of nothing but the Trade.

To me, Sir, it does not appear, that COPARTNERIES are better calculated to regulate trade, than to promote learning : One friend may advise, one partner may assist another ; but associated numbers, though they may pillage together, cannot practise together. When a surgeon seeks out a partner, he selects one, on whom a share of his cares and anxieties may be safely devolved, who can assist him

in his operations, who will assimilate himself with him in his opinions, and in his practice; who watches while he sleeps, who is at home while he is abroad, who feels the same cares and the same interests, and assists him with his hands, and his whole heart. But when a greedy, unprincipled being, associates with himself, not one partner, but many! not one individual to partake his anxieties, and share his labours, to be at home while he is engaged abroad, in town while he is in the country, awake while he is asleep; to concert along with him all his cures and operations: but, takes to himself first one partner, then a second, a third! and a fourth! and a fifth!--When he chooses men endeared to him by no ties of friendship, distinguished by no superiority of talents, marked and pointed at as dull and ignorant men, fit to slave and drudge, and plunge right onwards in the wake of some greedy practitioner! When such a man is plainly perceived to form his connections from the basest motives, and to multiply them, far as public credulity will allow! Can his own conscience give a fair impartial testimony to the honesty of his motives? Does such a man ever feel that the service of the public, the saving of his fellow-creatures from suffering or death, are motives most congenial to his nature? Can he feel that he only does these things the better to fulfil the duties for which he is qualified by long experience, following a period of severe study? Can his natural talents be divided thus among the swarming members of his avowed copartnery, and their secret assistants and partners? or his acquired talents be diffused through this mass

of heretogeneous materials? Could so many partners, though they were humble as clerks, and supple as running footmen, appear every day, or even every week, to present to their master the various reports of their doubts and difficulties?

Sir, those are questions founded on facts which there is no evading, and which all honest men can read with composure, while you must shrink from a reply. The surgeon who feels himself engaged with five Partners, two Physicians, four Apothecary Shops, Thirty Apprentices, and Eight Coach-horses! can hardly pretend to imagine that he is employed in the deliberate practice of a profession which requires continual thought: where study and meditation best prepare the mind, while the right performance of duties requires a composed and quiet life. This, Sir, is an argument, on which a man may quote and repeat his own plain sense, with as much confidence as he would the maxims of a Bacon or a Hume; and therefore, I do repeat to you, that “ though a MOB LIKE THIS may PILLAGE TOGETHER! they CANNOT PRACTISE TOGETHER.

The scene presented by such a copartnery, not all equal in talents, not all distinguished for respectable education, not all arrived at that period of life which invites confidence, must be one which a man of ordinary sensibility would be ill able to endure. This is essentially, and by its very constitution, a system of confusion, hurry, and misconduct. A young man, rising gradually in his profession, with good education and independent principles, will have his experience come upon him in portions, not too great for

due assimilation : But when a young man is received into a numerous copartnery, hurry is implied, he must at once abandon reading or thinking, and betake himself to sheer trade \*

His associates, whether they share among themselves the patients or the profits, (I believe you call it) a subdivision of labour and of spoil which would seem to defy all the power of arithmetic, think only of patients and profits; and nothing but such a system can any way explain the phenomena you have mentioned in your last quarto; viz. that there are young men so little ambitious of an honourable reputation, so little acquainted with the principles of their profession, as to answer, on the day of their admission, the most trivial questions with hesitation and manifest ignorance, and who abandon science so entirely when this scene of solemn absurdity is past, as to FORGET the LITTLE they had learned, and daily become more ignorant as they advance in life.

Of all professions, that of medicine is the last in which confidence can be transferred from a man endowed by nature or study with high talents, to his convenient associates. The gifts of nature, or the acquirements of study; the acuteness of all the senses, the clearness of head, the combination of

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\* He is received as an associate among such worthies as are praised by Crook-fingered Jack, under the appellation of "PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHERS."

" Ou le seul art en vogue,  
Est l'art de bien voler."



knowledge and experience, are INDIVIDUAL, INSEPARABLE, cannot be DEVOLVED; and thence it is, that one man in an age becomes precious, because of his skill, learning, address, or courage, and his loss is a public grief. But you, in your zeal for the co-partnery trade, would have it believed, that any substitute may be used! That a Prescription is a Prescription, and an Operation is an Operation! That any jobbing physician may serve as a substitute to a well employed Professor! and any lump of fat, contented slothfulness, uneducated in point of literature, untaught in anatomy, surgery, or dissection, may become an Operator.

But, Sir, you take your opinions as your friends chose their partners, non ex re sed ex commodo; and these indeed savour much more of necessity than of choice. A few misguided people, not left to their own good judgment, but environed by officious and clamorous friends, may have the misfortune to become the dupes of your opinions; but doctrines and practices, so destructive of all emulation and professional excellence, cannot long prevail. “Those modifications of life, (says Adam Smith) and peculiarities of practice, which are the progeny of error and perverseness, a mean desire of gain, or at least of some accidental influence, or transient persuasion, must perish with their parents.” Your’s, I believe, will have a more speedy and tragical conclusion, and will overwhelm you with disgrace.

You will no longer take offence at my openness and candour. I have many opinions directly the reverse of your’s, which I shall never be ashamed to



acknowledge, and which I think it a duty to propagate.

“ I believe, that a skilful Physician, or able Surgeon, never can be represented by any DEPUTY; else a man of those splendid endowments would not be so highly valued during his few and fleeting years of vigour.

“ I believe that no one can become a skilful physician, or able surgeon, by mere EXPERIENCE.

“ I believe, that in the profession of surgery, manual address, so common in the lowest trades, not only is of no avail, but is never void of danger, when not qualified by science and knowledge. It is as a sword in the hand of a fool.

“ I believe that an UNEDUCATED surgeon, is no more capable of becoming an OPERATOR BY CUSTOM AND USE, by imitating the manner of other operators, or trying (ignorant of the structure of the human body) to fulfil the directions written down in professional books, than a physician of attaining to excellence, by trying a variety of drugs, or, in other terms, by EXPERIENCE, without SCIENCE. The one may persist in cruelties, the other in absurdities for ever, without any consciousness of guilt. But the physician or surgeon, who takes upon himself the charge of a fellow-creature's being and present life, without having sincerely studied the principles of his art, by whatever name he may be distinguished in this world, his true title is registered in heaven.”\*

Tell us, Sir, for you best know all the analogies of trade: Is there any other trade, is there any other city, in which such combinations are known? Is there any Surgeon or Physician in any other city, who would be represented by partners, or where a mob of partners would be received?—Who is partner to Mr Cline, Sir William Blissard, Mr Abernethy, Mr Lynn, or Mr Cowper? Are any of these men so little proud of their personal acquirements, as to send deputies to do their duties; or so unprincipled, as let their name out on hire to a banditti of Surgeons? Are the independent inhabitants of the city of London, so careless of life, so indifferent to professional excellence, (the only hope on which a sick man relies) so undistinguishing, as to commit their health to the care indiscriminately, of any stipendiary assistant, or partner, deputed by a trading apothecary, too busy with his gain to fulfil his duties? Would any man of plain and homely sense, who had worked out his independence by thrift, and had formed his opinions of public men or public talents; give his confidence to any unknown person sent to him in the name of Mr Lynn, or Mr Cline?

Who is partner to Dr Sanders, Dr Baillie, or any physicians of reputation in that vast and populous city? Name the person, so lost to honour, so unjust to the public, so untrue to his profession, so unworthy every way of the reverence with which I name those well educated and able men, and I consent to withdraw that contempt, with which, through half my public life, I have regarded you politics, and to

apologise for the tone in which that contempt has been expressed.—But, while these questions remain unanswered, or answered by evasions, such as you are capable of inventing; the public must feel, and the profession will declare, that your principles, though openly avowed, and very manifestly gainful, have as yet made no progress in the medical, nor even in the fashionable world.

In that great city, where individuals exist in all possible modes of independence; cabal cannot affect opinion; paltry interests, and petty solicitations have no influence on a man looking round him for help, and caring for nothing but talents. The man of low degree is seduced by the advertisements and promises of the quack; the man of rank and intelligence, trusts only to the learning and reputation of a physician; but both are alike independent in their choice; and it would be difficult to find a man so credulous, and undistinguishing, as to receive graciously any kind of deputy. What should the feelings be of a man unused to such combinations, what his astonishment and alarm, when, having called a gentleman eminent in his profession, the mere opinion of whose skill had a salutary influence on his spirits, found, in an unsuspecting moment, his curtains drawn aside by an unknown person?

Though I am very sensible, that the greatest practical difficulties have been vanquished by you and your friends; yet I can assure you, that, in other cities and in distant countries, these are obstacles as yet unsurmountable; and that advertisements for SUB-

STITUTES, and BOUNTIES to them, are limited to occupations very opposite to those, which the copartneries of Surgeons and Physicians of this city profess.

It is from no petulant desire of proposing questions, that I ask so many: With any other I should be sparing of what is always a doubtful, often an insulting form of speech: But to you, every question is an unequivocal compliment, both to your knowledge of trade, and to your volubility of reply.—Is there in London, any apothecary EDUCATED, or RATHER BRED in the SHOP, and busied with the detail of trade; familiar rather with medicines, than with their qualities; skilful no farther than to distinguish slight indisposition from serious danger; and so honest as always to call the physician of the fairest reputation; who would offer himself to consult with Surgeons such as Lynn or Cowper? Who would affect to advise, to controul, or to rival such men? Or who, unskilled in surgery, and ignorant of anatomy, would take the knife in hand, while surgeons, trained in the dissecting room, and skilful in their profession, stood by amazed at their temerity and want of feeling? Were a person so educated, to act such scenes, as have been not unfrequent in this city, in Lithotomys, and Hernias, and Femoral Aneurims!—no busy politic friends, no associates in his rashness, could alter the complexion of the offence, or repress the feelings of an injured public: The notoriety of the fact would draw down a signal punishment on the foolish, sinful, perpetrator



My questions, and, I acknowledge it, are affirmations, with still a reservation in favour of those analogies with which Dr Gregory, Professor of the practice of physic, may in future favour us, in regard to the conduct of the profession in other cities. I affirm, that there are NO COPARTNERIES, far less CLUBS, and CONSPIRACIES, of Apothecary-Surgeons and Physicians, in other cities ; in London, Dublin, Liverpool, Bristol, Bath, or Manchester. I affirm, that in London a man's honour would be blasted, his talents suspected, his fortunes ruined in a week, who should attempt to form an establishment of JOURNEYMEN SURGEONS. Let us try by hypothesis this question, and observe, Sir, this is indeed a moral question, but of such a kind that one would hope it could never be illustrated by fact.

You recollect, Sir, your celebrated practical theorem, arising so naturally out of your inquiry into the temper and dispositions of the ABERDONIANS,\* viz. "that reputation is exactly worth as much as it will bring;" a saying which should be inscribed over your private temple of Hygeia in letters of gold. Suppose a person of our profession settled in London, and duly impressed with this profound maxim: suppose that person to acquire by chance, or industry, or talent, or circumstances, a small share of reputation, and with this said reputation very willing to "make haste" to be rich,† and to ascertain the pre-

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\* See page 256.

† These are the terms in which this insolent coarse man has repeatedly insulted the modest and most respectable members of the College of Physicians.



cise value of the said share of reputation, by proving "how much it would bring." Could that person act more wisely, than to dole out to the public, not those talents which, whether natural or acquired, are INSEPARABLE! but that REPUTATION which may be DIVIDED into SMALL and VENDIBLE PORTIONS? And how could he so happily, so instantaneously, accomplish his object, as by endowing five active partners with his name? By this admirable invention he would accomplish this practical problem of separating talents from reputation, the useful and the gainful endowments from each other, so that, while the talents remained quietly at home with their individual possessor, the reputation might travel into all quarters of the city by various vehicles to fetch home gain. Thus, by a fine operation in Pneumatology, the quality reputation is separated from its substratum talent! and the public, being once persuaded that there is no essential connection, the REPUTATION, the only VALUABLE product, could be brought to market in any quantity, and at the lowest price.

Could a trader in this way established in London, "in vast, and opulent, and still increasing London," accomplish such an object more effectually, than by taking to himself first, one partner residing in St James's! then a second in Westminster! then a third residing at Temple-Bar! a fourth far in the City! a fifth in Oxford Road! while he himself, the fountain of reputation, and head of the society, dwelt at Charing Cross: Each partner, having his shop, apprentices, assistants, and patients; but associated in

one petty incorporation, by indentures, extending even to their heirs, successors, and future partners?

Suppose the head of this society of surgeons, though not conscious of incapacity, yet conscious of advancing years, sensible of the daily improvement of science which he has not composure to study, and of the defective education of the busy members of his copartnery: could he imagine a happier scheme, or more likely to succeed, than exhibiting the whole rabble of his copartnery in some public institution, CONSULTING and OPERATING! YOUNG and OLD! APPRENTICES, ASSISTANTS, and all?

Suppose him to cast his eyes with jealousy and desire on St George's Hospital, fearful of the impression which might be made upon the public mind, by men of professional learning officiating there: Ardent and zealous men; men earnest in their duties, and rising high in the public estimation, by their operations, and by their public conduct. What must he feel, when, seeing this, he recollects that his copartnery, numerous but unfledged, consists of groundlings not yet even acquainted with the catechism of questions and answers at Surgeon's hall, far less with their science? What must he feel, when he sees reputation, as yet valued only from honourable pride, but which may become in time VENDIBLE as his own:—When he sees that reputation, growing to a head in that very place which might serve as a central point for his whole copartnery to hold their meetings in, and a theatre for the younger Assistants to exhibit their skill in surgery? It is not difficult to guess what would be the conduct of the PRACTITIONER at CHARING CROSS and his PARTNERS.

To prevent competition, to traduce rising talents, to obtain exclusive possession of public institutions, are great objects: But they are to be attained only by confederacy; and so much is this fact acknowledged, that confederacy is generally understood to involve such objects, and the achievement of such objects to imply confederacy. No one individual is equal alone to these various tasks; and the members of a copartnery are too little skilled in polemics, too incapable, by education or habit, of composing their own pamphlets, or indulging their malice; and confusion and hurry, and anger and fear, help to complete their incapacity. Tell me, then, could such a busy Society act more wisely than discard, at least for a time, the Doctor they were wont to employ, and hire, if not with money, at least with the spoils of their practice, some unemployed, unprincipled physician, willing to lease out whatever coarse talents of ridicule or defamation he chanced to possess, and so to enter on immediate employment and *DAILY BREAD*, staking his reputation and his prospects in life on the success of their plot.

But the profession need not fear such combinations in that great and opulent city, where real independency is known in all ranks of life: Where those in our profession who have acquired reputation by their excellence and skill, are allowed to enjoy that reputation in peace, and to pursue their enquiries, their studies, and their practice, unmolested. There are in that City no Hereditary Surgeons, no, not one to contrive; nor Hereditary Physicians to promote; nor Hereditary Managers of hospitals to be-

come the dupes of such politics. The moment such a combination were formed in any city, it would be treated with public contempt! The pamphlets of such a Physician, defaming the moral character of any description of Surgeons; and all his accusations against them, of want of charity or capacity, want of professional talents, or want of feeling for the sufferings of the poor,—far from being acknowledged by the Managers of St George's Hospital, or by the subscribers whose privilege it is to elect them, would be regarded with silent scorn.

This, Sir, is not only a moral question we are engaged in, but a universal one, common to all professions: and I am willing to try it, not only by example, but by analogy.

The LAW is a profession in which liberal studies, and generous principles of conduct, are allied with a gainful occupation: Where, though a man may have profound knowledge, and great talents, without being employed, he can never, without genius and knowledge, rise high in practice. It is indeed a dignified profession, founded in ingenuous and liberal studies, with marked gradations, ranks, and dignities, to which every individual may aspire, terminating in the most distinguished honours, those natural and just titles, which society bestows on personal and living merit.

A young man, while he aspires to these, acts before the public, and in the presence of his profession, an ingenuous and manly part: But were it possible that men, educated in literature, and proud of their talents; to whom all the leading principles of other profes-



sions, and other sciences, are known ; should depart from that liberal emulation which they at present feel, to unite with men of a lower cast, and seek employment by new and secret ways, unworthy of their education ; what would become of the profession, by which the true principles of government and liberty are maintained ?

Let us suppose, that of those respectable and worthy men, who now conduct, as clerks to the Signet, the common course of business, *AB, CD, FG, HK*, and four other associates, were resolved, whether they could or could not perform the PROFESSIONAL DUTIES, at least to possess themselves of the PRACTICE of the county of ARGYLE, and to divide the spoils ! That from having common interests, they came to form a common property in their profession, and to enter into Partnership : To assume successively their respective clerks as successors in that firm : And to hire one common Lawyer ; one, calculated to understand the purpose of the association, and to enter into the spirit of it. That, confident in villany, and now sure of practice, this Lawyer stood forth unblushing at the bar, and in open court traduced the reputation of every Agent connected with the said county of Argyle, however remotely, charging them, upon every possible occasion, directly, and indirectly, with want of honour, honesty, or professional knowledge ! while he praised his immediate friends, and paid due compliments to those who had the wisdom to employ them.

Suppose him next to clear the way before these thriving Agents, by indiscriminately reviling their



whole profession and tribe ; directing his calumny against their more immediate Rivals, and especially against those whom the public approbation, or conspicuous talents, marked as men likely to thrive in practice ? What a disgusting sight would it be to see this clamorous Pleader, subsidised by the spoils of their practice, shouldered up by this mob to the bar, there to discharge his extravagance, his virulence, his spirit of party, and his scurrility ?

Suppose him, after having gratified all their malicious propensities, to indulge his own : To traduce next the whole FACULTY of ADVOCATES, the EXAMINATORS, the DEAN ! The COMMITTEES ! and the INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS ! To expose to the public the most secret transactions of the Faculty ! To prevail with the world to credit a lying tale about his charity, and to believe, that his whole course of life, his PLEADINGS, MEMORIALS, CONNECTIONS, and PRACTICE, were founded in the most benevolent, liberal feelings ! to believe, although such Memorials, and such Pleadings, visibly occupied his whole time, that he were, notwithstanding, the person in that faculty the most retired, most studious, most profoundly skilled in the principles of the law, a man of the most refined sentiments and moral feelings.

Suppose this expert Practitioner in the law, to circulate, first, through the several members of his profession, and then gratis through all ranks of society, a succession of MEMORIALS, in which he assured the world, That a charitable zeal for the poor was his sole motive for universal calumny : That though the public had expressed a high degree of confidence in

the talents of some among the Younger Lawyers, their principles and practice were notwithstanding “**ABOMINABLE**, and worse than abominable !” that they “**lied ABOMINABLY !**” and “**drank ABOMINABLY !**” and “**quarrelled ABOMINABLY !**” That notwithstanding the presence of the Older and more respectable Lawycrs, these Younger Baristers were drunk during their pleadings ! were ignorant, rash and fearless ! Unadvised in all their proceedings, and uncharitable in all their thoughts and actions ; that those clients, who came to claim the protection of the court, *in forma pauperis*, and were delivered over to such young lawyers, were virtually condemned to die ! That the **MEMORIALIST**, though by nature, and by generous dispositions, he was averse from declaring their Names, was yet bound to say thus much in justice to the public concerning these Younger Lawyers, viz. that many an honest and worthy man had, by their ignorance, died a shameful and unmerited death ; and that the inhabitants of this city, who were so infatuated as to admit them into their houses, had much better admit so **MANY MAD DOGS**.

Pray. Sir, tell us, you who are a Public Character, a man of a learned profession, and accomplished education : who have had your opportunities of frequenting polite society ! tell us, whether, supposing it possible that such conduct could be endured, the profession of the law could continue to be esteemed an honourable or a learned one ? I think not, Sir. I am persuaded, that in such a profession, an Adventurer of this description would have found real talent opposed to his burlesque ; and that every man

who valued his own character, would have turned from him with disgust : The constitution of the profession would, by such politics, be utterly ruined : The stations of honour and profit would soon be filled by the clerks and menials of the confederacy : The barrister would learn to strive for practice, by other arts than those of eloquence and learning.

The Young Lawyer, who, according to the present system, claims, by his education and talents, the privilege of appearing and practising in the courts of justice, the practical school of his profession, would then owe his opportunities to the lowest and most ignorant practitioners, and would learn to cultivate such men with every obsequious art, and prostitute his talents to their purposes, if he wished to appear in the public practice of his profession, unmolested.

The Young Lawyer who cannot now ally himself with a fellow barrister, too closely, without loss of dignity, would then be seen familiar with a leash of Agents, or a gang of Clerks ; concerting with them, in close divan, the means of clearing the Bar of all obstacles, and of increasing practice. This he must do, if he would thrive in practice ; for the soundest enquiries into the principles of law, the most fervent, eloquent pleadings, would avail him nothing.

I have, I believe, stated this analogy very fairly ; and if right, I am right at once. I shall not then disgrace my argument by idle repetition, far less by the painful endless task, of reasoning with one who wants that sense to which I would appeal, as entirely as the deaf or blind want the senses of hearing or of vision ; or as some, who seem to enjoy both

in perfection, are yet incapable of distinguishing the harmony of colours or sounds.

Though a metaphysician, you have no apprehension of professional character, nor of the constitution of that order to which you belong: And though a hereditary professor, you are altogether insensible to the proprieties and observances which that high station requires, and to the unspeakable advantages of rank. Station gives a lustre to the most ordinary talents, and is, to a man of real greatness of mind, that fulcrum which Archimedes required, “a point on which to rest a lever that could move the world.

I have affirmed, I believe I might without presumption say I have proved, that a Copartnery of Surgeons, Physicians, Shops, Apprentices, and Coach-horses, is essentially a system of confusion, hurry, and misconduct. That the young man who is invited or inveigled into such a society, or born an heir and successor to such gains, must abandon reading and thinking, and betake himself to sheer trade, to insure the price of his labour, or the riches of his inheritance.

Yet there is an art surpassing all that has ever been imagined, by which such a society of men, running to and fro, traversing each others courses, and perplexing each others practice, spoiling their fellow-practitioners, and traducing all who are worthy of their enmity,—may be made to have actually the appearance of a society of grave, learned, and studious men; occupied unceasingly with the pursuits of science; meditating works of deep learning! publishing consultations! abridgments! treatises on



the most interesting parts of surgery! and all the while performing the most miraculous cures on PERSONAGES of the FIRST DISTINCTION!

The art is simple; it is the art of ADVERTISING BOOKS and CURES.

“ We have the pleasure to announce, That *ADMIRAL LORD DUNCAN* is completely recovered, after having undergone A VERY DANGEROUS OPERATION, which was performed by THE CELEBRATED MR BENJAMIN BELL, SURGEON OF THIS CITY! The SUCCESS OF THE OPERATION affords much cause for joy to the inhabitants of those kingdoms.” \*

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Now, in this advertisement, announcing joy, deliverance, and happiness, to those kingdoms, you will observe the delicacy with which the claim is laid to the unanimous gratitude of the REJOICED INHABITANTS of kingdoms! by that celebrated surgeon Mr Benjamin Bell!

By what superlative professor in the art of panegyric such bills are composed, we need not stay to inquire: Probably, as Puff says, “ one who could clothe ideal walls with gratuitous fruits; insinuate obsequious rivulets into visionary groves; or fix the temple of Hygeia in the fens of Lincolnshire.”

The art of becoming celebrated is now reduced to the most refined simplicity; and you who express so much exultation at the ungainly attempts of young physicians, “ descending by the chimney, or rising

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\* Advertisement delivered repeatedly in all the newspapers of his city, and transcribed verbatim.



through the privy," to the most conspicuous stations, must be charmed (whatever the nature of the operation here commemorated,) to see an old and dexterous surgeon make so excellent a use of a nobleman's name; to see him plant his foot so sure upon such a part; \* and mount at once before the public.

The Advertising and travelling department is known in every Copartnery concern to be full of difficulty; and none but those qualified to write in this peculiar stile, could be relied on in a profession full of contingencies; where this duty, indeed, branches out into an infinity of delicacies and complexities: Where remarkable cures are to be announced! remarkable "deviations from the usual practice of the profession" vindicated! books never composed nor intended, to be boldly advertised! the characters of rivals to be defamed by anonymous pamphlets, and their books and publications anticipated and reviled in counter-advertisements, of volumes never destined to exist. These, Sir, are no easy nor ordinary duties; and require a perseverance in artifice, a fervour of malice, not easily to be found in nature, and never to be exalted to their due perfection, but by long practice.

Of all the departments of a copartnery, this is the one concerning the usefulness of which I have the greatest doubts: I must with humility confess, that your enmities, more than my own deserts, have

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\* It was reported to be a Fistula in Ano.

made me any thing: You have not suffered me to walk quietly through the world, nor slumber on in stupid mediocrity; but have made every act of my life, my studies, my preparation for practice, my lectures, my entrance into public life; a succession of painful but salutary efforts.

My first publication on Anatomy was the subject of that rude and mean pamphlet which you praise so extravagantly. My succeeding volumes have been signalised by the most extraordinary counter-advertisements that ever issued from the press; and my honour, honesty, and professional principles, my talents and my conduct, have been the theme of your particular malignity through all your quarto volumes. You have all along forgotten, that “there are some minds like some herbs, which give out their qualities only by being bruised:” You forget, surely, the plot of Moliere’s amusing drama of making a Physician by thumping! It is a thing not so impossible as might be imagined. You and your best friends have taken such incessant persevering pains in my behalf, that your arguments of this nature, so persevering, and so often repeated, have brought me into a more confident opinion of myself. Even though I had been utterly destitute of talent, your method with me must have had some effect; but, born as I am with ordinary talents, and some steadiness of mind, your success has been beyond your expectations or your wishes.—Do not grudge your labour, you shall have the full benefit of whatever talents you have created.

Well, Sir, for ADVERTISEMENTS! which are a useful thing, pertaining and belonging to a useful Art:

my recollection will help me to some specimens well worthy of the attention of the world, and of all who desire to thrive by the arts of Copartnery. Do not imagine me so vain, Sir, as to believe, that I have been through life the sole object of your arts: I am well aware, that there are a thousand general purposes, tending to the general interests, which each anonymous PAMPHLET or public HAND-BILL might serve. I was an accidental sufferer in that gallant exploit by which you obtained possession of the hospital by storm, and substituted a Party for a Profession, a Copartnery for a Royal College!

The next enterprise was delicate and difficult, viz. To impress the world with a persuasion that certain grave and learned works were preparing with unequalled industry by the said Copartnery, while nothing in truth was in motion but the various wheels and machinery of the trading department; a machinery, which only announced the craziness of its construction by these uncouth noises.

One chief difficulty was, how to depreciate whatever works of science were designed by others; how to prevent the public looking for improvements in science, skill in operating, good faith, decent morals, the manners of gentlemen, or the sentiments of Christians, any where but in the Copartnery. In short, how to make the COPARTNERY alone seem a College of men of deep learning, pregnant with new and great designs, “practising the only mild or innocent methods of cure:” and publishing the only books which it was safe for the profession to study! And, finally, to prove, that those who were not of

the number of this select band, were a sort of intruders into the profession, pretenders in science, and hypocrites.

We are now, Sir, arrived at that period of our enquiry, when it is safe, and indeed necessary, to renounce metaphor, and appeal to facts. They little know the state of this city, who believe it to be a school of medicine where diligence or science are held in high repute; where a man may pursue his studies with every aid, and his practice without dishonour. It has been, ever since you have assumed a public station, a scene of confusion and intrigue. The first Professor of our school does not revolt from tasks unworthy of the lowest pamphleteer; from calumnies connected plainly with his interests. It is a city where a man, in place of seclusion and undisturbed study, must watch over his reputation, be ready to repel continual malignity, and to struggle for his life. The threshold of your College, like the great stone in the centre of the city of Mexico, is the scene of those ruthless attacks: "On that bloody stone the prisoner, taken in battle, was placed as a spectacle; a sword indeed was put into his hand; but he was chained by the ankle to the stone, and assailed by numbers, till he dropped down and expired." \*

FIRST, The pamphlet which you honoured with such particular notice, was the first of a series which

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\* Vid. History of Mexico, translated from the Italian by Charles Cullen, Esq.



you were destined to complete: And from this first specimen of malignity, to your last quarto, I shall give a short catalogue raisonnée. That pamphlet was entitled “ a GUIDE to the MEDICAL STUDENTS attending the UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.” It was, as the first Professor of that day declared, the most infamous piece of knavery that ever dishonoured a public school; and openly and impudently professed but one object, viz. to warn students against attending Mr Bell’s Lectures. Such was the unequivocal compliment with which my first professional endeavours were honoured, and which I treated with silent contempt.

This attack on my reputation as a LECTURER, having entirely failed, there next appeared an attack upon my reputation as an Author, which was distinguished by many memorable circumstances, and especially by the well timed IGNORANCE of Dr Gregory at first, and the extravagant praises which, at a more convenient period, he bestowed upon this literary achievement. It was entitled a “ REVIEW of the writings of JOHN BELL, SURGEON in Edinburgh, by JONATHAN DAWPLUCKER.” This malignant attack was stuck up like a Play-Bill in a most conspicuous and unusual manner, on every corner of this city; on the door of my Lecture-room! on the Gates of the College, where my pupils could not but pass! and on the gates of the Infirmary, where I went to perform my operations.

I know not what might have been the consequence of such hostility being allowed to pass unrepelled. The criticism was every way contemptible; but this extraordinary and most conspicuous advertisement, stuck up ostentatiously, as if by some public autho-



riety, on every gate of the College ! and of the Infirmary ! might have done much, and might imply a suspicion of want of spirit, or want of capacity, which was no longer to be suffered. No alternative then was allowed me ; a second pamphlet ! unremitting attacks in every form upon my reputation ! were dangers not to be overlooked. I, for a few weeks, left this thing, in the likeness of a Play-Bill, stuck up on every conspicuous place in the city, and took my measures in silence. I continued to perform my operations with composure, and to deliver my lectures : I then favoured the world with such a critique as my avocations would allow, on the works of my worthy colleague, Mr BENJAMIN BELL. and entitled it No. 2. being a review of the SURGICAL WORKS of Mr BENJAMIN BELL, by JONATHAN DAWPLUCKER.

In the first number was reviewed one volume of Mr John Bell's System of Anatomy. In the SECOND was reviewed, in like fashion, the SIX VOLUMES of Mr BENJAMIN BELL's System of Surgery. The advertisement was of the same form, and of the same size ; it was stuck up on the same board, and on the same gates and sticking places with the first. But this, Sir, was not like the advertisement of your friends, a mere brutum fulmen : I neither mistook my bird nor missed my shot : down came the offensive advertisement, which had been renewed and carefully kept in the public eye for many weeks ! and down came the SIX VOLUMES, the whole covey at one shot, and never a leaf has fluttered since.

I must now do myself the justice to say, that I incurred those enmities by no disingenuous contrivance,

or unworthy art, to undermine this gentleman's reputation. It is very true, Sir, that I did not find that the friend you cultivated with so much assiduity, was the most learned or admirable writer in our profession. I found him wonderfully ignorant of anatomy, yet confidently employed in converting his confused notions of the structure of the human body, into PRACTICAL CONJECTURES first, and then into most absurd RULES OF SURGERY. I did my duty, Sir, in warning the profession of this gentleman's ignorance; but I wrote no pamphlets to undermine his reputation! I boldly, and openly, in a book of science, proclaimed my difference with him in opinion, on most essential points, convicted him of ignorance, and pledged my reputation as the proof. This, Sir, was a fair appeal to professional men, and it was doing my duty to science: When I saw such incredible ignorance, I forgot the virtue of silence.

“Nec tacui demens,———

———et verbis odia aspera moyi,

Hinc mihi prima mali labes; Hinc semper

Criminibus terrere novis; hinc spargere voces

In vulgum ambiguas, et querere conscius arma.

From that moment I incurred the enmity of all your tribe.

Sir, there are one or two circumstances; worthy of the recollection of a gentleman, curious as you once were about pamphlets; for you were once very curious, always very curious, till you felt the inconveniences of minute inquiries. FIRST, the vindictive spirit of this attack was dictated by interest,

which no man can fail to understand, who chooses to read with candour the first sentences of that pamphlet. The anonymous author apostrophises me in the following elegant address: "One thing, you should particularly aim at, I *mean*, to be attacked publicly by some *eminent man*; because, you might then with great propriety cry out persecution: you should therefore *attack* the character of the most respectable brethren of the same profession with yourself; the farther your assertions are from the truth, the more apt will these respectable characters be to *attack you*; and, *in that case*, you would gain *your point*."

"What do you think, *therefore*, of affirming, that these remarks have been written by SOME of THESE MEDICAL GENTLEMEN, out of pure spite and ill nature, in order to tarnish those laurels which they could not hinder you from obtaining? and to diminish that GLORY, which they could not rival. You would only have to represent their attack, as proceeding from envy at superior abilities and skill, and from a desire of CONCEALING from the world your MERIT; which, if sufficiently known, would destroy THEMSELVES."\* This plan you have indeed followed, but I do not think you have gone far enough: THESE GENTLEMEN! are too PRUDENT, and too GOOD

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\* Dr Gregory has bepraised this sorry pamphlet extravagantly: This must be acknowledged to be a very extraordinary specimen of grammar, even from an Anonymous Pamphleteer; but it is the language and the wit, the dry humour, which Professor Gregory delights to praise. It is, I presume, from liking the purpose, that he has come to admire the language and the wit.

NATURED to retort, or perhaps they are TOO PROUD to SPEND EVEN A THOUGHT UPON YOU." \*

The magnanimous and generous rivals here alluded to, were that celebrated Copartnery of Surgeons, then five in number; and since then I hear the corps has been augmented. They were at that moment busy with the intrigue which was to put them in possession of THAT HOSPITAL, upon the gates of which this advertisement, so ominous to the peace and respectability of the profession, was stuck up.

SECOND. It is a very suspicious and guilty looking circumstance, that this conspicuous BILL, though posted on every gate of the city, never chanced to be noticed by Dr Gregory! He had yet three distinct and pressing incitements, each of them cause sufficient for observing a phenomenon so connected with the most important operations of his life. He was instituting a strict enquiry into the state of the HOSPITAL, and a severe scrutiny into the CHARACTER, the TALENTS, and even the TEMPER, of the Surgeons! He was composing a bulky MEMORIAL, addressed to the Managers of the Infirmary, respecting the conduct of the SURGICAL department; and he was DEFENDING HIMSELF in the Consistorial Court, from a prosecution for calumny in regard to an ANONYMOUS PAMPHLET. Now, if Dr Gregory could have traced any pamphlet to the suspected source, or even proved a likeness in the stile, manner, or purpose, it would have operated as a kind of exculpation; but this meek, honourable, innocent, IGNORANT gentleman, never KNEW of these pamphlets till years had elapsed.

\* DAWPLUCKER, No. 1. Preface.



**THIRDLY,** It is singular that Dr Gregory, while in a private communication, viz. in that letter reprinted in page 61. of this volume, soliciting Mr John Bell to approve of the most unprincipled abuse that ever was perpetrated in a public hospital, praised him in most ardent language for repelling this calumnious attack ! But, he no sooner discovered that Mr Bell was not to be moved by his hypocritical whine, than he found out, all at once, that DAW-PLUCKER's performance, although notoriously in the very first sentence defective in grammar, as much as in spirit or wit, was a piece of most " refined irony and DRY HUMOUR," perfectly unequalled since the days of Dean Swift.

**FOURTHLY,** Every thing but the names of the parties who sought to wound Mr John Bell's good name, was plainly expressed in this first paragraph ; and though the advertisement had conspicuously occupied its place for nearly a month, the moment the Critique of Mr BENJAMIN BELL's works appeared, Dawplucker, NO. 2d, disappeared ! the advertisement was torn down ! the pamphlet was no longer to be found !

**FIFTHLY,** It is singular, that, in the year 1799, Dr Gregory being then in perfect health, sound in faculties, and inquisitive as ever : two extraordinary medical pamphlets were published : Both were advertised in no very reputable fashion, on all the Gates, especially that of the Infirmary, which as a public functionary Dr Gregory was obliged to pass every day at an appointed hour, both Dr Gregory and his well informed Infirmary Clerk. In the year



1800, Dr Gregory published, and, of course, in the said year 1799, must have been employed in composing, a voluminous memorial, in which Mr Benjamin Bell and Mr John Bell are not forgotten, nor any medical quarrel, foreign nor domestic, omitted. Dr Gregory did not content himself with a politic silence, but confidently declared, that he knew nothing of these pamphlets ! of the contending parties ! or of the purposes !

I should be ashamed, Sir, to stay debating about your veracity ; I leave it to the College to which you properly belong. But I am well aware that you durst not know any thing about such pamphlets, else you must have confessed a foul and secret conspiracy lay against my reputation, by your best and most useful friends.

Do not imagine, Sir, that I shall shrink from the duty I have undertaken ; nor fear to call the system of Edinburgh by its true name, a SYSTEM OF INTRIGUE. I shall prove it such ; and whatever advantage your worthy friends may have had during years of silence over my reputation, you cannot deny that I have had the sense to view your various operations with calm indifference, and to despise your arts.

From the time of this unfortunate adventure of Dawplucker, your precious friends continued the war with great circumspection ; they conducted it like Kings of Sardinia, or Spanish Juntos, not by arms, but by manifestos ! not by books, but by neat flying advertisements ! till Dr Gregory, in an unlucky hour, came to incumber their intrigue with his lumbering quartos.

Of these extraordinary ADVERTISEMENTS, I shall give a short ingenuous account; and I shall persist in describing them as ADVERTISEMENTS!—mere ADVERTISEMENTS, because they had no relation to books; no books corresponding with the advertisements ever existed; none even were published; and the advertisements were destined to serve such purposes as books never could fulfil.

It had been my custom, from the earliest of my studies, a custom which I have never allowed myself to neglect, even in the hurry of practice, to take accurate reports of every interesting case; to make drawings of every extraordinary disease, and to plan with care every operation, comparing always the sound and natural, with the diseased condition of the parts: Those volumes, so interesting to myself as precedents, accompanied with useful sketches of anatomy, and plans of operations, accumulated in number. I little hoped that this private study could be useful to others, even to the younger part of my profession, but I soon perceived, that ANATOMY had hitherto been too little connected with surgery; that practical surgeons were too little in the habit of actual dissection; and that very few were enabled to represent, by drawings or plans, the operations they had projected or accomplished. I recollected that gentlemen occupied in actual practice, had in general renounced the study of anatomy long before they had engaged in the practice of surgery; and thence began to entertain a hope, that the accurate recollections, the plans and sketches, I had been so careful to preserve, might be useful to my profession.

No sooner had I announced to my pupils at lecture, my design of publishing a SELECTION from these VOLUMES OF CASES, which they had so often heard me read and explain to them, than I found, to my utter astonishment and dismay, that a very great and original genius, a gentleman celebrated in surgery, had by mere accident been employed in the same laudable study ! That he was JUST READY to publish a selection of CASES and CONSULTATIONS : I resolved that no precipitancy of mine should interrupt the progress of his work, nor deprive my profession of so valuable a collection of facts as that which was announced in TWO OCTAVO VOLUMES.

“PRESENTLY will be PUBLISHED, CONSULTATIONS and OBSERVATIONS on the most important parts of Surgery, by BENJAMIN BELL, F.R.S.,” &c. Alarmed by so singular a coincidence, and awed by the superior learning and skill of this great surgeon, I waited long and composedly for this precious collection. But the public expectations were disappointed ; a work invaluable to society has been hitherto withheld from the profession by some unaccountable delicacy of the learned men who have succeeded to this gentleman.

That volumes, such as this gentleman had announced, and which, to the profession, must have proved a resource in every difficulty, and, to our suffering fellow-citizens, a source of comfort and confidence, should still be withheld, is ever to be lamented. “ Those volumes he had, for many years, been employed in arranging for the press : ” “ They were Narratives of accidents and diseases, in the MANAGEMENT ! of WHICH he had been personally concern-

ed; a great proportion of which related to CIRCUMSTANCES in WHICH he had occasion to act in consultation with other PRACTITIONERS!

We shall not yet allow ourselves to despair, because facts continue facts in all ages, and those invaluable papers must still exist, and are now more precious than ever, since we have lost this celebrated surgeon. This gentleman, besides, was not among the unfortunate men of learning, whose papers may fall into the hands of ignorant or designing persons: He had at that moment the incalculable happiness of having four assistants or partners, FELLOWS of the Royal College of Surgeons, all, like himself, men of learning and science. And we can perceive that he had a confident belief, that his living fame, or posthumous writings, would never be neglected; for, along with this advertisement, he announces another invaluable and strictly PRACTICAL work! "At some future period, I or my SON, now engaged in the same profession, may give an abridgement of the whole, which may serve as a MANUAL or DIRECTORY (like the catechism you speak of) for those occupied in the LINE of CHIRURGICAL OPERATIONS!

Thus was the whole mind of this celebrated surgeon intent upon science; and all that were connected with him were occupied, like himself, in advertising, republishing, abridging, operating, and consulting, and practising! the same profession! Why those literary projects have been interrupted since the death of this gentleman, it would be difficult to conceive: If posthumous fame is dearer than present fame, and a last request sacred, this volume



will still appear, and the world be no longer left to imagine, "That a great man's memory cannot survive his natural life two months."

After some years of advertisements had elapsed, and the profession had been wearied out with expectation of this great work, I adventured to publish the FIRST VOLUME of these CONSULTATIONS, which, if I am blessed with health, it is my intention to continue. I made but one slight alteration in the title page of the work so long expected, I mean the name at the bottom of the page.

"CONSULTATIONS and OPERATIONS on the more IMPORTANT SURGICAL DISEASES; containing a series of cases calculated to illustrate, chiefly the doctrine of TUMORS and other IRREGULAR PARTS of SURGERY, and to instruct the young surgeon how to form his prognostics, and to plan his operations! Being a supplement to the Principles of Surgery, and illustrated, like the former volumes, \* by drawings and plans, by JOHN BELL, Surgeon."

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\* The title page was continued thus: In this volume are registered various observations, 1. On relaxation and preternatural extension and growth of the skin. 2. Thickening of veins and cellular substance. 3. Tumours of the bones, deformities of the fingers, hands, and wrist, from scrophulous indisposition of the general habit, and great tumours of the knee and shoulder-joints, from neglected fractures and other injuries. 4. Polypi of the nostrils and face. 5. Tumours of the gums, and cancers of the mouth. 6. Tumours of the cheek, glandular and cancerous. 7. Tumours of the angle of the jaw. 8. Tumours of the thyroid and salivary glands. 9. Tumours of the throat, suppurations of larynx, and other diseases affecting the breathing and swallowing.



However painful the sense or the avowal of inferiority may be, I must confess that I always felt incapable of contending with, or even of imitating this celebrated surgeon in SURGICAL ADVERTISEMENTS. But he and his friends, and companions in science, have long enjoyed the benefit of those talents. This is not the only occasion on which they have enjoyed all the thriving honours of advertisements, while I have had for my poor share, the unprofitable labour of composing and publishing the books. A volume of surgery, which I had prepared with infinite pains, illustrating all the forms of operation by sketches taken from the dead subject, or from the living body, was announced in these terms.

The Operation of Lithomy, and the Diseases of the Urethra, in four sections, accompanied by Drawings and Plans of Operations :

1. Of the Anatomy of the Parts.
2. The History of Lithotomy.
3. Plain Rules for performing the Operation with the Gorgest or with the Knife.
4. Practical observations on the introduction of the Chatheter ; on the Diseases of the Urethra ; of injuries of the Perinæum of Fistula and Stricture. Of the Diseases of the Prostate Gland, and of the various Operations of Puncturing the Urinary Bladder :

By JOHN BELL, SURGEON.

I know not how the list of these important subjects could be more briefly stated, or less offensively : This was not an advertisement, it was the ne-

cessary announce of a book not projected, but actually completed.

I could hardly imagine that a work of science could become an object of vengeance: But, while my book-sellers, MESSRS LONGMAN AND REES, \* were meditating at what season it might best be published, and immediately after it was laid upon the table of the FACULTY of ADVOCATES, and of many of my private friends, the following most unaccountable and incredible ADVERTISEMENT, MEMORIAL, PROTEST, or MANIFESTO,—give it, Sir, the name you like best, was published in every newspaper for many months.

“ IN the PRESS, to be published early in the Spring!  
A TREATISE ON the DISEASES of the URETHRA.

“ In which a MILD METHOD of CURE is RECOMMENDED in preference to the use of Caustic ; being an ATTEMPT to show the danger and VARIOUS BAD CONSEQUENCES, of this severe and painful practice, &c.

BY

BENJAMIN BELL, F.R.S.

SURGEON IN EDINBURGH.

“ Among other objects of the author in this treatise, the following are the most important.

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\* These gentlemen have to me, and, as I believe, to all the literary world, behaved with a degree of liberality and candour, which I should think it most ungrateful to omit any opportunity of acknowledging.

“ 1st, To make fully known to the public the origin and history of THAT PRACTICE, and the dangerous symptoms which it very commonly excites.”

“ 2d, To show that CAUSTIC is not a new remedy in Strictures, as many have been induced to believe : That it was much used upwards of two hundred years ago ; but that, after many and LONG TRIALS, the EFFECTS of it were found to be so DREADFUL ! that it was at last EXPLODED ! in every part of Europe, chiefly by the exertions of the most distinguished PRACTITIONERS ! of the AGES in which THEY LIVED ! OF WHOM, it is sufficient to mention Saviard, Le Dran, Astruck, and our late Mr Sharp of London, all of whom wrote in the most decided manner against IT.”

“ 3d, That the unfavourable opinion, and concurring testimony of so many eminent PRACTITIONERS ! against IT, seemed for ever to have decided the fate of CAUSTIC ! in the cure of stricture, when, UNFORTUNATELY ! it was again proposed as a NEW remedy about eighteen years ago ; and, since that period, has been REPEATEDLY RECOMMENDED ! with uncommon zeal, probably, from THOSE WHO WROTE IT ! being IGNORANT ! of this history of caustic ! for it would be uncandid and unjust towards them to suppose, that if they had known IT ! they would have ventured to recommend a remedy which had long been deserted, for its SEVERE and CALAMITOUS effects.”

“ 4thly, That, in consequence of these REPORTS ! of their PRACTICE ! it has been adopted with a degree of favour which IT does not DESERVE, which

has also been increased with the PUBLIC, being profoundly ignorant of the pernicious effects which IT! formerly produced."

" 5thly, That there is little reason to doubt ITS! being speedily LAID ASIDE AGAIN! when IT! is known that every thing which these celebrated men who have been mentioned, recorded against IT! has not only been confirmed by recent experience of the most eminent PRACTITIONERS of the present age! but that other distressful effects are found to result from IT! of which no older author has given an account!"

" 6thly, That the effects to which the author alludes will be more fully stated in the TREATISE ITSELF! But as they are HIGHLY PERNICIOUS! and DAILY becoming more FREQUENT! he reckons IT! a duty that he owes to mankind (oh precious hypocrisy! to mankind!) to state them explicitly to the public without delay, SO THAT THOSE WHOM IT MAY CONCERN! may INQUIRE STRICTLY! into them! and determine according to the evidence they shall meet with!"

" They are as follows!

" 1st, INTENSE PAIN! along the whole course of the Urethra."

" 2d, Total SUPPRESSION of URINE! which, in repeated instances, has required the formidable operation of PUNCTURING the BLADDER!"

" 3d, Excessive hæmorrhagy, which no REMEDY can STOP! and which few constitutions are able to withstand! N.B. The quantity of blood that is lost in

this manner, having been known to amount to eighty ounces in a few hours!"

"4th, Permanent swelling of the TESTES! FISTULOUS SORES IN THE PERINÆUM, and even in the substance of the URETHRA ITSELF! NONE! of which LAST are ever known to heal."

"5th, MORTIFICATION of the PROSTATE GLAND! and contiguous parts, which in every instance proves FATAL!"

"6th, The WHOLE of these consequences might reasonably have been expected from the action of such a DESTRUCTIVE ARTICLE! as Caustic, or such a delicate membrane as the Urethra; but other events are found to result from it! which could not so well have been FORESEEN! In various instances IT! has completely destroyed VIRILITY!—It lessens the EXPULSIVE POWER of the URETHRA! in which also it frequently excites such a tendency to inflammatory ADHESION, that the largest parts of that canal, in some instances the WHOLE of it! has ENTIRELY CLOSED UP! and *NEVER CAN BE OPENED AGAIN!* and terminating in a degree of MISERY! of which none can have an idea but the unfortunate sufferers THEMSELVES!" \*

That ever an advertisement so shocking, so indelicate, so unworthy of any but those who are driven to the worst expedients to gain their "daily bread," should be for months repeated in our newspapers, is a dishonour to the city in which we live! But all

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\* This Advertisement was repeated at a very great expence for MONTHS in all the Edinburgh newspapers.



TRUTH is SALUTARY to MAN ;\* and I shall endeavour to make even truths like these useful.

I am now to comment upon a most ungracious text, and to acknowledge that this advertisement DOES belong to the profession ; though, under your old pretext of charity, it outrages decency, and exceeds in the art of exciting alarm, groundless, false alarm, the worst denunciations of those who are obliged to betake themselves to the worst of trades for the sake of bread. But, once more I repeat it, “All truth is salutary to man ;” and should the world ever again be insulted with such indecencies, it shall be taught to distinguish the purposes for which a man, busied about the gains of practice, publishes an ADVERTISEMENT, without ever intending to publish a BOOK.

A gentleman of the same profession with me, and in the same city, anticipates a book of mine, already completed, deposited in public libraries, read by many, and likely to be approved, the contents of which could not be unknown:—And straightway the book, and whatever might be useful in it, is anticipated and depreciated in an ADVERTISEMENT ! a mere ADVERTISEMENT ! Is this to be denied ? Are such arts to be commended ? Was this the moment which a man of right principles or right feelings, would choose for coming forth against me with an ADVERTISEMENT unsupported by any BOOK ?

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\* This wise saying is one of the DAILY proverbs of SOLOMON ! who knows the qualities of herbs, from the hysop on the wall, to the CEDAR in LEBANON,—and, he LIVES IN LIVERPOOL.

But, independent of any fancied relation to me or my book, which might not indeed "be worth the NOTICE of the GENTLEMEN of this Copartnery, who were, by their own description, "too PRUDENT, and too GOOD NATURED to RETORT; or perhaps too PROUD even to spend a thought upon me," \* independent of any hostility which my vanity might prompt me to imagine, there are things in this manifesto which do loudly call for public censure, and which men of plain sense will do well to reflect on. Here your great and learned friend appeals to the public, and pleads his humanity! his feelings of duty towards mankind! for that alarm which his conscience directs him to excite, by the most extravagant representations. To you, a great physician, full of the spirit of romantic honour; and through you, to the public, I in my turn appeal; not indeed without considerable "DELAY." I have too long delayed exposing such acts, though I have feelings, and a profession and a public duty, as imperious as he or you, or any of your tribe, could boast of.

When a true man apprehends that practices inconsistent with the principles of his science, have made a dangerous progress, he writes a book: He reasons, persuades, and instructs those of his own profession, and through them, the only legitimate judges, he tries to influence the public mind. But this is

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\* This is the description of that proud Copartnery and confident College of Scientifics, in their own Dawplucker, No. 1. as formerly quoted.

professedly an advertisement, a mere advertisement, unsupported by a book. No such book EVER DID EXIST. That it ever was IN THE PRESS, is a part of the advertisement inconsistent with truth. It was not an advertisement, announcing a book by which the profession might be instructed or reformed ; but a MEMORIAL against the profession, addressed to the public, and designed to excite vulgar prejudice and groundless fears, ignorant and gross as the language in which such apprehensions were insinuated. It was a sort of MANIFESTO, charging all the sufferings of the public upon the ignorance of surgeons, and imprudently affirming, that the ENQUIRIES of this deep and learned author, had brought to light paramount authorities AGAINST THE USE OF CAUSTIC, from men far excelling in talents and in honour, it would appear, those of the present time.

The authorities, opinions, and the books, of which “ as a part of the history of their profession, he accuses us of being ignorant,” are the very humble school-books of Le Dran, Saviard, Astruc, and the late Mr Sharp ! books which every school-boy reads, and which, important as these names may sound in this protest, no man of sense or penetration would read twice, nor even once, otherwise than as an act of duty, that he might not be ignorant in any part of the history of his profession. But for their opinions ! and especially for their opinions on the use of caustic ! the opinions of men who never saw a caustic bougie, and hardly ever witnessed the disease ! Why, this is, I do verily believe, the first time these authors ever were so honoured. Little did they imagine that

they were to constitute the MOST DESTRUCTIVE ARTICLES in an Edinburgh Newspaper.

Well, this is indeed new; the learned Mr Benjamin Bell, in his deep researches into the history of surgery! going back so far as half a century, to the volumes of Le Dran, and Sharp, came in a happy hour to reprove the ignorance of Mr Hunter, Mr Home, and Mr John Bell; to remind them of the books which it became them to study, and warn the public of the DISTRESSFUL CONSEQUENCES resulting from IT,—IT, IT, viz. the CAUSTIC! To warn them in language, vehement and impressive, in language suited to his profound and sudden emotions of DUTY TOWARDS MANKIND! of sufferings such as none can have any idea of but the unhappy SUFFERERS THEMSELVES, which are highly PERNICIOUS, and daily becoming more frequent.

What does the public know of Saviard, Le Dran, or Sharp? How can the public compare the merits of their respective opinions, or judge of the deference due to each? How can the public even know whether this is authority at all? I affirm, that on no such subject is there one page written by Sharp, Saviard, or Le Dran. But the public can BELIEVE, and SHRINK IN DISMAY from the TERRORS of such SURGERY! and look for comfort only from Milder METHODS.

This is the true purpose of an advertisement unconnected with any book, and addressed to all “WHOM IT MAY CONCERN!” This gentleman was of your school, Sir; he wrote no books to instruct his brethren, to persuade, or to reform their practice,

but addresses to the public against the profession, to persuade the sick not to be over rash in giving their confidence to those, who were ignorant of the history of their science, and rude in their practice ! who used such “ DESTRUCTIVE ARTICLES ” as destroyed indeed every thing they touched ! and he wrote, in this particular advertisement, a clear, distinct, ingenuous account, of such INDESCRIBABLE MISERIES, as none but the unhappy sufferers themselves could know ! And reminded the world that he was the only person who still practised a MILD AND GENTLE METHOD OF CURE.

This gentle soul, so abhorrent of surgery ; who never proposed to SLIT UP the NOSTRILS in polypus ! to cut the TRACHEA while such operations were performing ! to make an opening in the SIDE, when A RIB was injured, such as to lay bare the rib and pull it up with the forceps, spathula, or fingers ! to cut into a FRACTURED LIMB, to DISENTANGLE any muscle, a ligament which prevented the reunion of the bone ! to cut up with any incision of ten inches long, a Hydrocele, which might be cured by injecting a little port-wine.

This gentle soul, so abhorrent of surgery or cruelty of any kind, cures the diseases enumerated in this advertisment, and remedies the dangerous consequences of the practices of his more IGNORANT brethren, by the very MILDEST METHODS imaginable. This he takes occasion to announce, to all whom IT MAY CONCERN ! and, indeed, if this catalogue of injuries, committed by a rude profession against all who are weak enough to confide in them, have no effect ; if this enumeration of “ distressful consequen-



ces," "from such DANGEROUS ARTICLES, becoming daily more frequent, will not induce those whom it MAY CONCERN," to "enquire strictly!" If total SUPPRESSION of urine; "PERFORATION" of the bladder; "excessive HÆMORHAGY, which no remedy can stop, and few constitutions can stand: If permanent SWELLINGS of the testes; FISTULOUS sores, which are never known to heal: If GANGRENE of the PROSTATE GLAND! destruction of VIRILITY! the loss of the EXPULSIVE powers of the urethra! The whole canal closing up, so that it can never, never, never, be opened again!" will not invite "those whom it may concern," to enquire strictly about this MILD METHOD of CURE, and to commit themselves to the care of the gentlemen who practise it; why, when a man's DUTY to MANKIND will be converted into a mere sinecure, and a person of genius will have but poor encouragement to compose splendid TITLE PAGES OF ADVERTISEMENTS, so full of "TRUTHS SALUTARY TO MAN."

It was most natural, Sir, that the public and the profession should read a memorial of this nature with very different feelings. With the public, to whom, "from a deep sense of duty to mankind," it was addressed, it must have excited an instantaneous and salutary alarm, and a blind devotion to the MILD METHODS of this gentleman, even at the time when a person of distinction, after flying for life from the miseries of these MILD METHODS, had returned from under Mr Homes' care in a few weeks in perfect health.

With the profession, it must have been received with no slight degree of confusion and surprise! for it

was a reproof hardly to be expected, and not easy to bear : And still to this day they must wonder, what has become of the VOLUME “ already in the press,” which supported such wonderful denunciations, and facts so very incredible. TOTAL SUPPRESSION of URINE ! puncture of the bladder ! permanent swelling ! Incurable fistulas ! Hæmorrhagies which no constitution can stand ! the whole urethra closed up, never to be opened again ! gangrene of the prostate gland, which in every instance proves fatal ! ! !”

What is the gangrene of the PROSTATE GLAND ? I know of no such disease : Nor, if it were possible, can I imagine how there could be a gangrene specifically of this gland, distinct from that of the surrounding parts, nor how it could be distinguished, either before or after death.

Sir, I pledge my professional reputation upon this fact, that no such disease exists : That none such was ever imagined or mentioned for any other purpose, than this of discomposing and alarming the public mind. No practitioner in antient or modern times, in any city of Europe, no practitioner, mild like this gentle man, or caustic as I am, knows any such disease, even by name ; or will acknowledge any of all these consequences of a practice, now as universal as ingenions.\* Not only will there be found no man willing to acknowledge, but no one able to detect, such shocking consequences.

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\* The profession owes this improvement to the celebrated Mr Hunter, and many improvements in practice to his successor, Mr Home.

Now you, Sir, a metaphysician and logician, boast of your skill in dilemmas, show us what error there is in this. "The author of this voluminous work, this advertisement, it is to be hoped, for the sake of veracity, had seen these horrible disorders: He must have seen them either in his own practice, or in the practice of others! If he witnessed such dreadful consequences," "such indescribable miseries," after any ungainly attempts of his own, or of his Copartnership, in using "this DESTRUCTIVE ARTICLE," it is a pity he had not abstained from those insulting reflections about the ignorance of modern practitioners, and their negligence in the study of the history of their profession. If he saw it in the practice of others, I must reckon them very weak brethren, indeed, who invited a gentleman, so able and skilful in writing ADVERTISEMENTS, to witness operations so unsuccessful, such "Closings of the Urethra," destructions of its substance, "Perforations of the Bladder, too," and "Gangrene of the Prostate Gland;" such misdoing as even the most hardened surgeon would blush to acknowledge;—why, their humility and simpleness is quite inexplicable! I wonder who they were! But sure I am, that they richly deserved to have this catalogue of their practical works published, and to have their "DESTRUCTIVE ARTICLE EXPLODED."

Though a mere advertisement may be the most natural and instinctive effort of those who are taught to cultivate trade; certainly the more usual and rational way of reforming practice, is to address the profession, to write a book: Therefore I cannot but

be persuaded that this invaluable volume, and many other advertised volumes, will yet appear. It was "in the press;" and you and I well know, Sir, that every thing that is really in the press, is sooner or later squeezed out again. It was "to be published in the SPRING;" and although, in our uncertain and surly climate, spring is often cruelly delayed, yet that spring we would hope may arrive!

The Copartnery cannot refuse to give to the world such invaluable works. Part of these volumes, if this advertisement is not all an untruth, are already printed; and for others, they have SOLID materials at hand: Where is the "Abridgement?"—Where are the "Consultations?"—Where this invaluable treatise on the Misconduct of Surgeons, and the Gangrenes of the Prostate Gland?—But all these promises will be fulfilled: These gentlemen cannot be insensible to the value which the profession will put upon such singular works, so long delayed, announcing such wonders. Nor can they be dead to that sweet spirit of humanity, that sense of "duty to mankind," which inspired the head of their society when composing this Memorial. They cannot answer it to their consciences or to the world, to allow such barbarities as surgeons are in this advertisement reported to perpetrate, such unheard of miseries, to become daily more frequent; the Urethra to be closed never to be opened again; the "Prostate to be gangrened," and the "Bladder to be perforated!" the world to be depopulated!

The CONSULTATIONS! the OBSERVATIONS! the ABBREVIATIONS! and finally, the REFUTATIONS! of those who are busied in those CRUELITIES: will



yet be published, and those precious volumes added to your quartos. Then will the profession flourish, and you will plant, in the midst of that hili of science the goodly tree which bringeth forth the fruits of practice. The dead and sapless trunk will flourish again, and though it do not wave its boughs on high, it will grip to the soil, and spread its roots amongst the clods.

Your pamphlets are all ADVERTISEMENTS! however unintelligible, the general strain of your quarto volumes, they are sure to conclude with something substantial. Having applied all your inetaphysical faculties to this branch of trade, you are as well qualified to frame a NEGATIVE ADVERTISEMENT as a direct puff! It is as easy for you to compose a paragraph WARNING the PUBLIC against relying upon the talents or the honourable principles of one or more individuals, as one DIRECTLY ADVERTISING your partner or yourself. This is a talent so very seldom acquired by a physician, or relied on, that I should think I did you a flagrant injury were I to conceal your proficiency in this branch.

The public have been unceasingly called upon to admire your upright conduct, and magnanimous principles, your generosity, disinterestedness, and quick sensibility to every moral wrong, the purity of your morals, and of all your motives. I cannot allow myself to leave this subject, without recording one example, involving a theory of all your fine feelings, and explaining your irascibility in regard to moral causes. You did me the honour to publish, in the year 1803, a quarto volume of 511 pages, with the



generous intention of speaking as you do of all other professional men, plain things, concerning my moral character and professional reputation. And after 510 pages of metaphysical cunning and sophistry, unintelligible to every human being; you conclude your quarto in these remarkable words, which no human being could misunderstand:

“ If they, viz (Mr John Bell and the younger surgeons) really hold, or even for whatever reason, profess those principles which I have explained and illustrated, and traced to their necessary consequences, they must, ipso facto, be understood to RENOUNCE all CLAIM to PUBLIC ESTEEM or CONFIDENCE. They will not only prove and illustrate, in the clearest and strongest manner, my DOCTRINE of the ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF SELECTION, AMONG MEN OF THEIR PROFESSION, EITHER FOR HOSPITAL DUTY! OR FOR PRIVATE PRACTICE! but will have the merit of POINTING OUT TO THE PUBLIC! which I could not have presumed to do! some of THOSE INDIVIDUALS! who ought first and most certainly to be EXCLUDED! and held as DISQUALIFIED FOR THAT SACRED TRUST! *Hic niger est, hunc tu Romane caveto*, must be the *universal* sentiment and caution with respect to every one of them! ANY MAN IN HIS SENSES, IF HIMSELF OR HIS FAMILY were sick, would as soon think of CALLING IN A MAD DOG into his house, as a PRACTITIONER who held the principles which they have so strongly avowed; certainly NO SUCH PRACTITIONER OUGHT TO BE! OR EVER WOULD BE! EMPLOYED! when one of DIFFERENT PRINCIPLES could be found.”

I lament to see how much, in spite of all your philosophy, "Practitioners" and "Practice," and "Daily Bread," and all the agitating reflections connected with these subjects, have disturbed your reason. That a metaphysico-philosophical disquisition on surgery by a physician, should come to this plain conclusion, is by no means unnatural; it is what experience, and a little observation of your habits of mind, and modes of life, has taught me to expect.

You conceived a very natural fear, that reputation acquired in an hospital, might somehow be transferred to private practice, and you hastened on by your anxiety the consummation you most feared. I am proud of all your expressions of hostility, and particularly well contented with this. Sure, if ever enmity could make a man proud, yours should be flattering to any man; to me most precious.

Here all your secrets (for you affect many secrets in regard to my professional conduct) and all your muddy metaphysics, are converted, by a slight change of terms, to plain sense. You feel that antipathy, which my independent and studious life must naturally excite; and you really gratify me by those tokens of a deep professional enmity, dictated by rivals! directed to a purpose, and addressed to my fellow-citizens.

It is with regret I tell you, that I look upon you as little better than a subsidised physician, writing calumny for bread; and I would advise you, if you have the least feeling of honour, independence, or goodness, which you have too much boasted, to a-

bandon your enmities, forget your talents, and let them rest: Study your profession, and provide happier reflections for your declining years: Learn to have a composed and sincere reliance on your own good intentions, and innocent life.

“Peace and esteem is all that age can hope.”

## LETTER XVIII.

ON THE DUTIES OF THE MANAGERS OF HOSPITALS :—THE EDUCATION OF A SURGEON :—THE TALENTS FOR PERFORMING OPERATIONS :—THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE ROYAL INFIRMARY.

## SECTION I.

That is the duty of the Managers of an Hospital to seek out men of talents : To reward industry and genius, and encourage Professional Learning, by promoting those only, who are so distinguished, to perform the Public Operations : That it is their duty to seek out such men as can give lessons of skill, discretion, and courage, to the Younger Members of the profession.

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ALL your doctrines are propitious to trade, and hostile to education. Impatient of that slow reputation which grows insensibly out of well regulated actions and diligent studies, and leads, at a respectable period of life, to public esteem, you would teach others, what you have practised so boldly : to leap the bounds of education, and flounder straight onward through practice.

I know no surer mark of talents than diligence ; nor any higher proof of an ingenuous mind, than that of being capable of improving by experience : But you have asserted, not only in words, but in fact, that the youngest and most uneducated surgeon may be taught to fulfil all the duties of the highest station, and by mere experience ! by trying again and again what he never learnt ! become the first Surgeon ; or, to use your own words, “ to have the

best possible chance of becoming, in DUE TIME, a Principal Surgeon of the Hospital, and of the City.”\* And here they are, Sir, in the Royal Infirmary, one and all, the youngest and most inexperienced members of the Royal College, Operating, Learning, and Teaching one another. Indeed, Sir, the Managers have proceeded a tragical length in an experiment, which begins to attract the observation of all the medical world.

I am confounded, Sir, with the improvidence of your doctrines. This was a notion of yours, which, while it continued a mere theory, might have imposed upon all the world, so seducing is this word experience to those who know not how cunningly it is abused. But you were to have your will: Men were to be elected to this arduous station, ignorant in Anatomy, and all the essentials of their profession, and put to learn by experience in a public theatre: young inexperienced men, unused with operations, uninitiated in that science which should give them confidence in the hour of danger; men hoping, and only hoping, for success, and agitated betwixt the foolish hope of reputation, and the dread of public disgrace. Your theory, calculated so truly for the genius of those you meant to serve, your disingenuous cunning doctrine, was destined to be ruined by an experiment as public as disastrous, as cruel, as costly of human lives, as ever was adventured upon by a man, pleading humanity as his motive, and

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\* Vid. Infirmary Memorial, p. 191.



declaiming with unprincipled audacity about youth and inexperience.

What your notions of EXPERIENCE are, I should never presume to conjecture from your course of life. From your writings, from the voluminous and voluble nonsense you have published on the subject of Surgery and Surgeons, I can only collect, that you do not imagine experience to consist in reasoning : That you do not conceive it to be a course of practical observation, founded on science, on a knowledge of the structure of the human body, an acquaintance with the facts and precedents collected during a course of ages, on a careful collation of the opinions and practices of the most celebrated authors. Diligence in study, and a careful preparation for experience, form no part of your system of education, nor of your estimation of talents : You plainly imagine that Surgery consists in dressing sores, and hewing off limbs with the dexterity of an artisan ! That Surgery is a sort of mechanical trade, to be acquired, like other trades, by use and practice.

How discreditable, how distressing, must it be to any ingenuous or well principled man, to have allowed himself for a moment to be seduced by jargon so low and cunning as this ? How mortifying to be marked out as one of those for whose behoof such disingenuous doctrines were contrived ? A hospital is not the scene for experiments of this nature, where students, assembled from all parts of the world, expect to see operations performed by men of distinguished talents, and to receive practical instructions, and the highest lessons in their art :

Where every thing is public, solemn, and impressive: Where hundreds are assembled to contemplate the unavoidable sufferings of a fellow-creature, with no other consolation, but the admirable courage and address with which they see his moment of suffering terminated. An operation is a distressing scene, even when conducted by men the best prepared for such awful duties: But when uneducated men, nameless inexperienced men, deficient in courage, science, and reputation, and all that should command respect and ensure success! When men, not coming with authority to teach, but with the wicked pretext of *LEARNING BY EXPERIENCE!* seeking for reputation! inflamed with a desire of operating continually, that they may have, like others, their chance of reputation from some accidental success, are the only operators; the scene must, indeed, be sanguinary and appalling: All that is sacred in the sufferings of a fellow-creature is forgotten! The operator thinks only of acquiring reputation! The spectators talk only of the operator's success.

That one uneducated in surgery or dissection, and familiar only with the daily rounds of an apothecary's practice; who has hardly seen a dead body, and never dissected the parts he is to divide in operations, should be placed on this conspicuous stage to earn a reputation, inflamed with the absurd hope of *LEARNING BY EXPERIENCE!* and "having the best possible chance of becoming, in due time, a principal surgeon of the hospital and of the city," is a most hopeless theory, and inhuman experiment.

I wonder, Sir, that the fate of your best friends, and

the tragical scenes which have passed in the memory of no few living, have not corrected your misconceptions : That the sufferings of the poor, while they have again and again roused the indignation of the profession and of the city, have never renewed those compassionate feelings to which you are so notoriously subject. But the surgeons of the present day are quite different men, and the poor no longer need your help, else you would again have mourned with the melancholy ox, over the contract which devoted him to butchery, and howled out like syllables of dolour. Now, your tender cares are employed, as is most due, in the cause of your profession ; in curing, by metaphysic aid, the discases of bodies corporate, and of colleges ; in casting out DEVILS ; and, like Judas Iscariot, working miracles, and preaching the gospel.

You have turned your intemperate passions, and burning zeal, towards other arts ; and left me alone, incapable as I may be, to explain the uses of education, and the influences of experience on the mind of a surgeon. There are some things, which I believe I shall be able to make quite intelligible, even to the most ignorant person ; and, therefore, I venture, without further delay, to address them to you : And now, that compliments to your veracity come to be of some value, I must say, that although you profess ignorance of surgery, with that kind of air which a man affects when he says of himself, what he hopes no one will believe, I am so far from being incredulous, that I believe your ignorance in

Surgery is almost equal to your ignorance of Anatomy; that your protestations of this kind, are much more sincere than you would have the world believe: I think, indeed, that it would be creditable to you, to make a few more avowals of this nature: It might be profitable for the public to know, on the same respectable authority, the whole extent of your ignorance in those things, which others imagine to be essential parts of the science you pretend to practise.

I know not how far you will be inclined to acknowledge that authority which I have acquired, by the just and indefeasible title of long study and faithful practice of my art. On other subjects, on moral subjects, even on points of veracity, and points of honour, I have ventured to dispute your opinions, to refute, to reprove, to wonder at your extravagance; but here, in my own profession, I pretend to teach you: And never did any man write with a confidence like yours, who had so much reason to hear with patience.

There is one source of confidence which I cannot but feel. Ignorance like yours is ever desultory, declamatory, involving in collateral illustrations, the irrelevance of the arguments or facts, while real knowledge goes point blank to the object: You have spoken about surgery, as if it were something you were ashamed to understand: I hope confidently, so to explain the principles of surgery, and the education of a Surgeon, as to show, that the science and its applications have been the study of my life. I will teach you what skill in surgery is, and how acquired; what education does, and what experience, towards



the forming of a man worthy of a public charge ; And I shall prove to men capable (as I trust some among us are) of humane and generous emotions, to the Managers of our Infirmary I shall prove, what a dangerous thing it is to trust to a blundering PHYSICIAN on questions of SURGERY, and to become the dupes of a professional cabal, while thinking only of their sacred duties, and the good of the poor ; unconscious of the scenes in which they were involved, and exerting no other powers than seemed necessary for reforming a protested manifest abuse.

That education is some help to experience, and theory to practice ; and that skill in dissection, and a knowledge of the structure of the human body, will assist in forming the talents of an able surgeon, are prejudices I have so long indulged and acted upon, that I know not how to abandon them to you. These notions have formed the theory of all my studies, and my best hopes of excelling in my profession. I have, in a former letter, endeavoured to compare a young man of independent spirit, ardent in the pursuit of science, with the slumbering successor to a copartnery of trading apothecaries : I shall present a picture, now, of one aiming at excellence, by STUDYING HIS SCIENCE, compared with one learning by EXPERIENCE, neglecting the best means of attaining excellence, trusting to chance for his reputation, and yet never doubting, till dishonour and shame fall upon him, that he is to become a celebrated Operator.

If, Sir, in explaining this, I should seem to state, in exulting terms, that system which I have myself



pursued in all my studies let this abate your malice ; that my life has not been a life of idleness, my claims are not founded in fantastic pretensions to genius ; the road by which I have aimed at professional excellence, is open to all. It is this absurd claim of inspired genius that I deprecate, for it leads to that libertine system which you have pursued, and ends in arts unworthy of our profession. The education I enjoin is a system of diligence and study, protracted through all the early years of practice: The doctrines I am about to explain may rouse ambition, and support genius, and ensure that diligence which yours would quite-extinguish.

Nor will I yield to you in sentiments of true humanity, in commiseration for those sufferings of the poor which I have so often witnessed, and can so well describe. Tho' not first in a kind of declamation which men of real humanity hearken to with suspicion and reserve ; though I do not imitate your bold metaphors of the Ox, the melancholy Ox, mourning over the contract by which he is delivered over to tormentors and butchers ! though I shall not represent any surgeon as deliberately cruel, or, like the Jew standing on his bond, prepared to cut his pound of flesh from the breast, nearest to the heart of his unhappy debtor ! Yet do I hold it to be my duty to represent the education due to our profession, and the deliberation required on entering upon its sacred duties. My theories differ widely from the proceedings of your favourite friends ; and I shall plainly relate the mistakes of men, resting on authority like yours, trusting to chance for their success, and hop-

ing to learn, by experience, what discipline and diligent study alone can teach.

Why should I not speak boldly, it is not my cause? The personal interest, the momentary little claim, that I could have in your hospital, is past while it is debated, ere it is acknowledged. But your doctrines are pernicious through all ages, useful only to yourself: I will not trust to experience, to show their bad influence, while it is in my power to convict you of every unmanly, ungenerous design; to convict you now in the very act. I hope I truly feel that deep and sacred regard for the poor, which you have affected, for purposes which could not long be concealed.

Your philosophy and your friendship are fatal to every cause, and every individual you mean to serve; if, indeed, you ever designed to serve a purpose beyond yourself. You have corrupted at once the sources of emulation and of education: You persuaded the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, that, by use and practice, ANY MAN AND EVERY MAN MIGHT BECOME AN OPERATOR! That they might justly give away those appointments which should be the reward of distinguished talents, and persevering successful study, to men every way unprepared for a public charge, every way incapable of improving by experience: And you taught young surgeons to believe, that, by a second apprenticeship, alas! not much unlike the first, and under men not more able than themselves; by EXPERIENCE MERELY, by trying over and over again, amidst the groans and sufferings of their fellow-creatures, what they had never tried

on the dead body ! they might learn to perform the most difficult operations.

When you had encouraged the most ignorant young men, with the hopes of rising by a reputation thus acquired, to be the first surgeons of your Hospital, and of the city, what had we to expect ? Sir, your doctrine has this plain tendency : to abrogate study ; to make talents consist in mere diligence ; and that diligence not in acquiring the elements of science, and preparing for public duties, but in mechanical labours : To make intrigues and votes, and all the busy restless agitations of a corporate body, the road to preferment ; and a station in the Hospital, the passport to fame. Sir, if, in place of reproaching you with being born in BROGDIGNAG, and educated in LAPUTA, we had said surely you had dropped from the Moon ; we still should be at a loss to comprehend how you could continue so ignorant of human affairs, as to think a public and arduous station a place for unprepared ; uneducated men acquiring reputation. I fear, Sir ; you have established a negative title of some import, “ NOT SURGEON TO THE ROYAL INFIRMARY ! ” and have at last proved, by an experiment of cruel duration, that there are heads, and hands, which experience, cannot improve.

It must grieve the truly compassionate, to learn the practical results of your intrigues ; and it must alarm those more immediately responsible for the safety of the poor. Them, and their cares and anxieties, you have left, in pursuit of higher interests, and ever new resentments. Intriguing no longer against the reputation of younger surgeons, but

against that of more immediate rivals, you have left the Managers to feel what it is to trust to a physician, in matters where his ignorance was avowed, and his principles and honour more than suspected : One who now stands charged with every thing that can degrade a gentleman, a scholar, or a physician ! with indirect practices, with avowed and deliberate “ deviations from the usual practice of his profession,” and more than accidental deviations from truth !

The duties of the Governors of a Public Charity are great indeed, as guardians of the health of the poor ; and more important still, by those collateral influences which their conduct must have, in rewarding professional excellence, and exciting emulation ; making the studious more in love with study by the conspicuous station which it ensures them. Their duties in respect to charity, go hand in hand with their patronage of merit. In selecting the best operators, the most judicious and able men, they exert a patronage of the most inspiring nature : They create genius, by encouraging it, and place the most cultivated talents in a conspicuous station ; for none is so honourable, none so becoming our profession, as performing the most arduous duties for the poor.

Great and dangerous operations form a principal feature in hospital practice ; for the labouring poor are subject to many disastrous accidents, and every disease of lameness, cancer, or tumour, is aggravated by unremitting labour, and by delay. It is thence the peculiar duty of the Governors of a Public Charity, to enquire with sincerity what are the talents most required ; how and by what studies a surgeon



becomes dexterous and bold in operations ; to encourage such studies, to profit by such talents, wherever they are to be found. For every operation, protracted or unsuccessful for want of skill ; every moment of torture ; every needless groan ; every night of misery past in their gloomy wards, which better skill or courage might have saved, must come home to their conscience. They have the care of those who have no other protectors, who shrink long under their miseries, before they throw themselves on the public charge, unfriended, houseless, helpless beings ; who yet have feelings of gratitude deserving a better fate.

Shall we hear men of finer sensibility declaim in the Senate, on barbarities inflicted on animals, and not feel deep sympathy with the slightest sufferings of the poor ? I hope and believe, Sir, I am more sincere than you can be in expressing feelings which I need to restrain. I have spent much of my life in services which could only arise from those feelings, in active useful duties, which you would disdain : I know that profession which you only write about, and this very hospital has been the place of my daily studies : and I shall prove, by documents of a most alarming nature ; by levities and indecencies amidst the groans of protracted suffering, not allowed in any other civilized country, that the operations performed in that hospital are the subject of barbarous merriment ; that our fellow-creatures lie under the agonies of protracted ineffectual operations, performed by those whom no one of our profession, no inhabitant of this nor of any city, will pronounce to be the best or most dexterous, the



most respectable or the most experienced Surgeons! by some who, before their course of experiment has come to its conclusion, have resigned their pretensions with shame, and I hope with remorse.

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## SECTION II.

On the EDUCATION and DUTIES of an HOSPITAL SURGEON:—Who having under his care, the long neglected, desperate diseases of the poor, and having of course to perform the most dangerous Operations, should be eminently skilled in Anatomy and Dissection; for these studies alone can beget discretion, courage, and address. Placed in a conspicuous theatre, he should be qualified, by his talents and acquirements, to give impressive lessons to the younger members of his profession, and to support the reputation of a public charity.

“That education is some help to experience, and theory to practice; that skill in dissection, and a knowledge of the structure of the human body, will assist in forming the talents of a surgeon, are prejudices I have long indulged.” Education is useful to those who have, and to those who have not, genius; the latter it teaches to act safely, the former it inspires with inventions, and enables them, in every unprecedented case, to contrive new and successful methods of cure. To all men, education in their peculiar calling is so essential, that I can never acknowledge any other criterion of merit, and hardly any other test of genius, than the enthusiasm with which professional knowledge is cultivated, the privations and sacrifices by which it is obtained.

I am not ignorant of the arts practised by those who affect to know every thing but their profession;

who prefer what Milton calls "mere dablements of learning," to the art useful to their fellow-creatures: gaudy trivial beings, all fluttering with metaphysics, philosophy, literature, and all kinds of profaneness, looking with contempt on the most useful parts of true philosophy, beyond the reach of their industry or genius. Why, these are mere accomplishments, mere ornaments, frippery in the true French style; ruffles in profusion, without a shirt: And in his finery have you strutted most insignificantly through life.

I am, in these points, pleased with the fashion of the antique world. I approve of substantial, useful knowledge, and think that every man, before he indulges in such studies, should have done something to satisfy his conscience, and fulfil his duties, to give the world assurance of his professional skill. For a physician, as for a surgeon, the most important of all studies is that of the structure of the human body; and such is the influence of this study, in inspiring the surgeon with intrepidity and courage, that he who knows not the parts he has to dissect, must be overcome with confusion and tremor, even in the very moment when he expects to earn applause.

I can well imagine, how one trained as you have been, in sciences which have no relation to any professional duty, should prefer Experience to Education! or, in other words, trade to science; and think education fairly superseded, the moment that employment can, by any expedient, be obtained. But I have found it very difficult to understand, how any man can imagine it possible to pursue our profession successfully, without a perfect acquaintance with the structure of the human body.

I can, indeed, imagine it possible for a physician, of better education than you can pretend to have, to pass his life with little consciousness of the value of this most important of all knowledge ; for he prescribes for disorders not visible, and with an uncertainty for which every allowance is made. The nature of the inward disorder, the operation of his remedies, his successes, and his blunders, are all involved in equal mystery ; he is safe from every detection, even death itself does not prove his incapacity.

But a surgeon, ignorant of the structure of the human body, cannot long conceal his want of skill : It is put to the direct proof : Even the assumed confidence of an ignorant man cannot deceive : The purpose of his operation is imperfectly accomplished ; he is betrayed into hesitation at the first appearance of danger ; and when a few, or many surgeons, destitute of knowledge, and trusting to experience, exhibit their uncertain art in a public theatre, their incapacity must be manifested by calamitous and disgraceful scenes.

With you, I am sensible, it may be otherwise : Educated in a more splendid way, metaphysics and the loosest reasoning must seem sufficient for all the purposes of practice : Prescribing may stand for thinking, and words for knowledge. But you must allow me in politeness one plain question : I am sure it is a humble one. Would it any way impede your reasoning on asthma, jaundice, delirium, dysentery, on any symptom, or any disease ; that you had thoroughly investigated the structure of the Liver,

the Lungs, or the Trachea; and that you had some conception of the structure of the Brain? I find it no hinderance to my reasoning on those subjects: Dr Monro, Dr Rutherford, Dr Bailly, find it none: Thinking is, indeed, a great impediment to practice; but yet I shall be neither reasoned nor laughed out of the prejudice I have so long entertained, that reflecting upon the structure of the Liver, or Brain, or any other organ, has a very natural connexion with curing its maladies and disorders.

I do not presume to advise you to begin, at your respectable time of life, either to soil your hands, or abase your dignity, with such low occupations. The study of anatomy is an early and difficult study; and a confused or hasty pursuit of this science, might involve you in very intricate reasonings, which your habits of practice enable you to dispense with. But the importance which this study must ever hold in the education of a Surgeon, I will most contumaciously maintain.

A Surgeon is not to guess at the situation of parts, but to know them! He is not to recite names conned from that CATECHISM which you have spoken of; but, to dissect, to describe in his own words, and to delineate the parts, and to “know them as well as if he had made them.” A Surgeon is not to TRY OPERATIONS, and by repeated trials learn them! but to study the ART OF OPERATING, and when he has learnt Operations, he may adventure to perform them.—Surely, the least that we owe in return for that confidence, with which a fellow-creature submits himself to our harshest decisions, and endures extreme pain



and danger, trusting to our skill ! is, to study with diligence every thing that may conduce to our success; to make ourselves perfect in that art which we exercise at the hazard of his life.

ANATOMY serves to a Surgeon, as the sole theory of his profession, and guides him in all the practice of his art : And, there are various departments of the study, each of which brings new accessions of knowledge. The least of its uses is, that it gives a dexterity of hand, and acuteness of sight ; a manner of searching for and seizing, with the most delicate hooks and other instruments, parts almost invisible to one not trained to dissection : And that dexterity and acuteness of sight, gives presence of mind in the moment of operation.

The tracing the course of the blood vessels and nerves, and reflecting on the natural effects of injuries, renders scenes of danger familiar by anticipation ; and inspires by degrees that address and courage, which enables a Surgeon to bear up undismayed, against alarms and accidents, when his own reputation is at stake ; and, what is more distracting, while the life of a fellow-creature is endangered : Of a fellow-creature who has, at his suggestion, submitted to a dangerous operation, and is fainting away in his hands, from pain and loss of blood.

But it has also a greater and more important use : It is the grounds of all argument, on questions of practice ; it connects the senses, with the reason. A knowledge of the structure and function of the part affected, a foresight of the changes which disease may produce, at once enables us to predict the



consequences of disease, to decide what operations may be useful, what safe, and how they may best be performed: For, the method of operating, must vary according to the probable condition of the parts.

The knowledge and dissection of the parts of the sound and healthy body, is called *ANATOMY*; and instructs the Surgeon how to operate. The reasoning on the various changes, produced in the several organs of the animal body, by disease, is called *PATHOLOGY*; and skill in this department, enables him to prescribe, to consult, and to decide, on the more difficult questions submitted to his judgment. The one makes a dexterous, the other a skilful Surgeon.

Here, indeed, your eulogiums on experience would not have been misplaced. Use in dissection, is so essential towards acquiring dexterity, and dexterity is so slowly acquired, that I know not whether the attempts of a boy learning to write, or to draw, are more awkward, or unsuccessful, than those of a young man, even of good talents learning to dissect. While the pupil employed in dissection is learning slowly how to distinguish a vein from an artery; nerves from cellular substance; glands from fat; to trace the blood-vessels, and mark their relations; to observe how the muscles make up the contour of the body, and how the vital parts lie in relation to those great distinguishing marks; he is learning every thing essential to form a Surgeon. And when he is taught, in the dissecting-room, to tie up all the arteries which communicate with a certain arterial trunk, and prepare for an Injection; and

when he proceeds to fix his tubes in that great trunk, and try its strength and resistance with his syringe, pushing his injection so as to fill, yet not burst the arteries : While he is dissecting out glands, injecting them with quicksilver, or passing wires into their ducts, he is qualifying himself for the most delicate and critical operations in surgery.

These reasonings, Sir, would be indeed superfluous, if this education were not rare ; it would be irrelevant, if the Surgeons who, by the force of your intrigues, under your patronage, or say, Sir, (as you are indeed capable of saying), by chance, without your knowledge, patronage, or approbation, are elected to operate in the Infirmary, were thus trained, in the preliminary essential studies. But what shall we say of men who dare solicit a public station, who dare appear in an hospital, attempting the most dangerous operations, knowing no more of anatomy, than is contained in “ that sort of short catechism ” you speak of with such contempt ? “ Words, words ! ” Who NEVER dissected, tied, nor injected arteries ! who never counted, handled, nor described in their note-book, those curious parts of the animal structure, which even a mere philosopher might look on with interest ! who, IF they have ever seen them, have seen them once,—one year ! that memorable year in which they attended a course of Lectures on Anatomy : Then, at the respectable distance of THIRTY FEET, they saw, for one moment, in the turning of a demonstrating table, in the twinkling of an eye, those minute and curious parts, which they dare to dissect on the living body,

But this is no concern of theirs; they are to learn BY EXPERIENCE; and in learning by EXPERIENCE, the most distressing accidents can hardly discompose them. They are predestinarians in surgery; and when they are unfortunate in their operations, they ascribe it to want of luck; like that ingenious gentleman who explained his want of skill in Chess, after a way very amusing to his friends: He said, “He had always very bad luck at chess.”

In compliment to your slender acquaintance with a subject on which you have written so copiously, I shall in a few words explain the three great departments of Surgical Skill. First, ANATOMY instructs the surgeon how to operate; and a great proportion of the most difficult and splendid operations in surgery, fall under this description. For example, the cure of *Aneurism* is a simple dissection: The disease is seated in the ham. The main artery of the limb is sought for in the thigh, where it is sound, unincumbered with tumour, and easy to be discovered: The operation consists in opening the skin; dissecting the muscles; laying bare the artery; separating the vein and nerve from it, and tying and dividing it. *Lithotomy*, or the operation of Cutting for the Stone, is also a simple dissection. The stone occasions pain, fever, torture: The patient would die if unrelieved: But, the parts are sound; there is no disorder to confound the surgeon; he has but to dissect on the living body, as he would in the dead; to open the bladder with his knife, and extract the stone.

Now, the surgeon just come from the dissecting-room, is competent to all such operations. These are

dissections of sound and healthy parts ; and the surgeon who cannot, in *any circumstances*, extract the stone in a few minutes ! or, in an aneurism of the arm or ham, tie the artery in the same space of time ! knows nothing, no not the very elements of his profession. The man who performs these simple dissections with manifest signs of confusion and fear, who protracts the patient's misery, who destroys him,—should be disgraced.

SECOND,—“ PATHOLOGY, or the ANATOMY of MORBID PARTS,” teaches the surgeon how to reason and decide, in the most critical circumstances ; and how to operate in cases of a more perplexing nature, where the parts are massed together by disease. Thus, in *Hernia* or *Rupture*, when the patient, from obstruction of the protruded bowel, has fallen into extreme danger ; the surgeon has to enquire into the symptoms, to estimate the degree of strangulation, to conjecture the condition of the parts, to imagine all the possible circumstances in which they may be found in time of operation. It is not simply a turn of sound intestine, nor the natural opening of the abdominal ring, that the surgeon has to look for ; but parts thickened, adhering, massed together, that he has to dissect : The sac, quite unlike the peritoneum, whence it is derived : the intestine almost gangrened : the omentum, a heavy and putrid mass : the whole a piece of confusion, which only a man skilful in anatomy, and well acquainted with the various appearances of disease, can disentangle. It requires a reflecting and sagacious head, well stored with precedents, and thoroughly acquainted with



the natural, and with the diseased form of parts, to guess whether the parts can be saved by any operation; or to distinguish in a half putrid mass, the Intestine from the Omentum, the Fascia of the thigh from the Sac, and to dissect these delicately and skilfully.

In a Tumour of the throat or nostrils, it requires no slight knowledge of those passages, and of the complicated parts with which they are surrounded, to prevent the matter bursting inwards! No slight knowledge of anatomy to open it outwardly! No slight degree of address, of such address as can be acquired only in the dissecting room, to prevent suffocation, or to save the patient from expiring from want of nourishment.

THIRD, These are merely dissections of sound or of diseased parts; but they are dissections by which the talents of a surgeon are estimated. There is another department of practice, where anatomy seems less immediately useful; where experience seems rather the result of reflection than of science, and bears more the aspect of common sense: But this common sense too, arises from reasoning on the structure of parts; and from a custom of estimating when injuries, almost destructive of organization, have taken place, what the powers of life will accomplish; what the living parts are able to bear. All such reasoning is formed on a just distinction of the species or degree of the injury; whether it consists only in a general contusion of a part, or of the fracture of its bones, and the bursting of its vessels.

A LIMB, for example, is, at once, DISLOCATED and FRACTURED, is torn by machinery, or is lacerated by



gun-shot : Its bones are broken into many splinters, its arteries are burst, and it would seem to a spectator, that a skilful surgeon judges of the condition of such a limb by mere experience, *i. e.* by having observed the usual consequences of such injuries, and by recollecting how it fared with a limb in circumstances nearly similar. It is not so : He judges by no such simple recollections, but by reasoning on all the causes of danger : **FIRST**, On the animal functions ; on the state of the whole system ; on the degree in which the circulation is excited, and the sensibility increased. **SECOND**, By estimating the value of the parts destroyed or injured, and by recollecting, in his own practice, and in recorded cases, what proportion of patients have survived, in whom the main artery of the limb has been lacerated, and the bones fractured. **THIRD**, By reflecting on the probable consequences resulting from such complicated injury : From the fractured bones being driven in among the flesh, from the lacerated arteries injecting the limb with blood, and from the state of the cellular substance : From the skin being detached by that extravasated blood, from the parts which it should nourish, and the pressure from that extravasated blood, oppressing the circulation and stopping the action of those arteries by which the limb should be supported. The degree of these injuries he estimates from the tension of the limb ; the colour of the skin ; the acute pain which the patient suffers, or the dead stupor of the part.

The surgeon thus calculates the danger of Gangrene, and the chances of preserving a limb, from

reasoning on the probable injuries of parts, with the structure of which he is thoroughly acquainted. In short, Sir, REASONING IS EXPERIENCE ' and there is NO TRUE EXPERIENCE which does not arise from a knowledge of principles, and which is not founded more or less directly on a knowledge of the STRUCTURE OF THE PARTS. All the rest is mere pretence.

Reducing luxations, dressing sores, or even hewing off limbs, is not experience, but something much the reverse : Thinking is experience ; and he will think best and fastest, and with the soundest discernment, who has the best materials for thinking : Who, after being thoroughly instructed in anatomy, is trained by reading to reflection : Who has been at pains to trace the history of his profession ; to remark the opinions of particular schools, or of former times ; and to account to himself for mistakes or prejudices, by considering the then state of science : Who has been careful to arrange in his mind, and register in his books, the cases he has seen, or the precedents which have been accumulated through many ages.

The studies of ANATOMY and PATHOLOGY are thus essential to experience ; the one makes an intrepid and dexterous operator, the other a skilful surgeon. The study of ANATOMY enables him to dissect the parts as he has seen them in the sound and healthful body ; while PATHOLOGY enables him to predict the condition of parts as altered in form or texture by disease ; and still to dissect and disentangle them, though massed together by inflammation, or compressed, and displaced, disfigured by tumours, or by effused blood. It is not reciting from your precious vocabulary or " CATECHISM " the names of parts,

though that qualifies a man for becoming a member of a Royal College, that will qualify him for practice: But naming parts first, then describing, then dissecting them; dissecting them again and again in different directions, and in a variety of subjects; dissecting, till names and parts are rightly associated in his mind, till he recollects, and can represent with ease, either by drawing, or by description, all their relations to each other. Anatomy studied thus, till, placing his finger on any point of the body, he can name the parts which lie within, will, indeed, make a man a surgeon.

The public, after being deceived by a blundering physician, conjecturing in matters of surgery, and blubbering about charity, and declaiming on experience, with a droll sort of cunning peculiar to himself, will not, I hope, be displeased to hear the opinion of one not unknown as an operator, on the studies by which the talent of operating may be acquired, Excellence in this, as in every practical science, can be attained only by diligence; and I believe I have proved the thesis I meant to maintain, "that education is some help to experience, and theory to practice; and that skill in dissection, and a knowledge of the structure of the human body, are the best accomplishments of a surgeon." I write not for a purpose, but state once more the opinions I have always maintained.\* Drawing, describing, and dissecting the parts, meditating on the changes produced by disease, comparing his own experience and con-

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\* Vide prefaces to my volumes of surgery, and address to my former pupils in my volumes on tumours.

jectures with recorded facts, and the opinions of others, are the studies of a surgeon; and they are studies in which, if a man would excel, he must spend a great portion of his life.

“ *Quam proclive ingenium hominum est omnium a molesta labore explorandi, ad credendi libidinem.*” Your doctrines are easily impressed! It is not difficult to teach young men to rely confidently on their own natural genius: It is easy to persuade men to negligence, to learn by experience those parts of knowledge which they should acquire by severe study, and know perfectly, before they enter on practice: Palatable doctrines of this nature hardly require so enthusiastic a teacher.

Why, what a daring fraud have you been guilty of, against the credulous unjudging public! what a piece of disingenuous cunning casuistry, in declaiming about experience, as if you had been treating of an abstract question; while you were reasoning by implication, about men wholly uneducated in those preliminary studies, and no way QUALIFIED for ACQUIRING EXPERIENCE? Dissection, drawing, studying, reasoning, and reflecting, had made no part of the education of those whose interests you meant to promote; and far from studying the masters in surgery, it would be amusing to know from you, a man of learning, who might be supposed to respect talents, and to affect the society of learned men, how many there are, among your best friends, who can read one sentence of Celsus, Hildanus, or Paræus. I believe, Sir, we shall hear no more of your tender sensibilities; of your EXPERIENCED friends, or young friends ACQUIRING EXPERIENCE, except in the way



of ridicule, when people would represent something very whimsical, or in a moment of levity amuse themselves with describing the state of surgery in this city.

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### SECTION III.

The difference explained, betwixt a Surgeon learning by *EXPERIENCE*, and one trained in *SCIENCE*. Skill in Dissecting proved to be the only just source of courage or of conduct : Sketches, first of a young man trusting that he will learn by experience, and agitated by a confused expectation of being able to imitate what he has seen performed by others : Second, Of one really skilled in the structure of the human body, and prepared by Dissection, to meet those dangers with steady courage, which one head and one hand only can, in the moment of operation, foresee or avert : Third, Of the whole fraternity of Apothecary-Surgeons assisting one another to learn by experience.

The Physical conformation of the Peasants and Artisans of this country have begun to assume a peculiar character from the Surgical Theories of Dr Gregory ; and all the greatest enterprises in Surgery are interrupted by *Lusus Naturæ*, Adhesions and Preternatural Sacs, such as are unknown in other countries,

THERE is all that difference which reflection should lead us to expect, betwixt a man learning *BY EXPERIENCE* to become an operator, and one taught *BY SCIENCE*, and prepared by every study that may contribute to success. The one is supported by conscious knowledge and skill, in a manly, steady, dignified state of mind ; the other, fluttering with fear and anxiety, and greedy of applause : And, sorry am I to say, that no scene, as we have learnt by experience, is so fit as the arena of an hospital, for putting your theory to the proof, or displaying the talents and temper of such men.



That cool deliberate courage which a tried commander shows in the hour of battle, a man of real science displays in the moment of operations. Accustomed with the use of instruments, and acquainted with the parts; dexterous by habit, and well able to calculate the dangers of every incision, he presents himself to operate with manly steadiness. Accomplished in all those studies which should give dexterity of hand, and composure of mind, and unaffected courage, he fears no unjust reproaches; provides no apology for accidents or misfortunes, by calling at each step of his operation, for the assistance and approbation of those around him; but stands up alone to those dangers, which, as they are the dangers of a moment, one head and one hand only can turn aside.

A man of science never proceeds without due reflection: The whole plan of his operation is perfect in his own mind: He communes with his assistant rather by signs than words, and his manner commands that stillness which is due to a moment of suffering, and essential to his self-possession and success: He is formed by education, and qualified, from the first moment in which he takes those public duties upon him, to give impressive lessons to the younger members of his profession: They are awe-struck with the first horrors of incisions and blood, but depart with gratified feelings, when they see the scene closed with entire relief to the sufferer, and happy prospects of success; and they learn to love and respect their profession, and to study it with emulation.

It is no unusual thing to see one unacquainted with

the first principles of our art, and quite unprepared for such a scene, attempting to learn by EXPERIENCE, and hoping to find that he is an operator. But a character more opposite to that which I have just described, a state of mind more unfavourable to the great duties of our profession, I cannot imagine.

He never presents himself like one come to give impressive lessons of courage and skill: Infirm of purpose, and exposed on that conspicuous stage, where every eye is turned upon him, he looks around for support: Numbers and silence, and the preparations of the scene, only repress the rash and transient feelings of confidence, to which he trusted: In every feature of his face, in every movement of his body, we read in legible characters, that title which you claim for him, "ONE COME TO LEARN BY EXPERIENCE."

His manner is perplexed and hesitating, his movements hurried, his mind unsettled to a purpose; by his quivering lip, and unsteady eye, even before his hand is seen to tremble, we can perceive why he is come: TO LEARN BY EXPERIENCE! to compare himself, if need be, with worse operators! to take courage for each new adventure, and consolation for every disappointment from the misconduct of others? to snatch at a temporary reputation by accidental successes; and, like yourself, to brave disgrace for the slightest chance of applause.

To be reputed an operator, is his sole object; and for this he will risk any thing, and knows not what he risks. He delights in the bustle of even the most trivial operations, and esteems himself fortunate, only when steeped in the colour of his trade! Surrounded by mobs of consulting Surgeons, and conscious of

impending disasters, he provides among these busy restless assistants, apologists for every accident! companions in every disgrace! strenuous apologists, for he takes special care, to make them parties in every stage of his operation, participators in every blunder of the hand or of the head. It is to disguise his painful feelings, that he calls them down from their places; and to hide his embarrassment, he hurries through these most agitating scenes, at the risk of his patient's life.

Vain of the occasion by which he expects to gain applause, he proceeds with an air of confidence through the first incisions; but on the slightest interruption, and almost on the first gush of blood, he is overcome with alarm. He sees nothing of what he expected! he introduces his finger, but can distinguish none of the parts he has heard SO WELL DESCRIBED, and has been taught to name! he can no way discover the vessels he meant to tie, nor can he feel his way, nor venture to strike his knife into the bladder or other cavity he meant to open! Arteries have been wounded, which he did not think of! the object of his incisions is yet unaccomplished! the blood is ebbing fast, the patient fainting, and that reputation for which he rashly courted this horrible scene, seems gone from him for ever: He sees reflected in the faces of his attendants, his own confusion, he calls them in mobs, but they only hurry his perturbed spirit with every kind of advice! in this moment of despair, he would give the world that he could lay down the knife.

There are operations, where the most daring surgeon will hesitate, where the most skilful will be for

a moment perplexed. When the Omentum Sac and Scrotum are massed together by inflammation, when Cancerous Glands, connected with a diseased breast, run deep into the Axilla, connecting themselves almost inseparably with the great vessels and nerves: When the passages of the throat are compressed, and the Carotid arteries encircled with tumours: when an aneurismal vessel is buried in extravasated blood; much experience may be required in distinguishing parts so altered by disease, much coolness, deliberation, and judgment, and the keenest senses, the steadiest hand, for proceeding in such dissection with safety. But who can assist the operator? Is not the life and safety of the patient entirely in his hands? Can any eye so well distinguish, any hand so curiously disentangle, these intricacies, as the man employed in the dissection, with every advantage of previous reflection, and it is to be supposed of perfect knowledge? These “are the difficulties of the moment, which one hand and one head only can judge of, which must be turned aside by an instantaneous instinctive act of courage, supported by skill and practice in dissection.”

Does your man of experience stand up alone, to the dangers of that operation which he seems to perform, or pledge his reputation for its success? Oh no, Sir, his enterprise and his chances of reputation are of another kind. It is his wretched policy to involve all present in the confusion of the scene; to make each assistant touch, feel, thrust his finger into the wound, talk, judge, and decide upon every successive step, till each becomes responsible, along with the operator, for his every act; for every error



of the eye, or of the judgment, for every dangerous stroke of the knife. He trusts not to his own senses, but makes each assistant, if there were fifty around him, look, feel, and judge! He trusts not to his own skill, but at every step he makes a pause; and before he will pledge himself for another dangerous stroke, requires all that are around him to decide whether it may be done!

Thus it is, that every operation is protracted, every pain doubled, every danger encreased: The sufferer is tortured by every impertinent or curious assistant, and often is carried away, exhausted and dying, from under their hands. But, there is this consolation for the operator, that he lays the lightest load upon his own conscience, and risks but a trivial proportion of the reputation he may have gained. His operation, in place of being a conspicuous proof of skill and deliberate courage, or an impressive lesson to younger men, is a confused attempt, accomplished not by a surgeon, but by a mob of surgeons, a scene of tumultuous clamour while it lasts, and of childish exultation, if by any chance it succeed.

Is a surgeon of this sort dissecting the femoral artery, with the purpose of tying it for an aneurism of the ham!—he proceeds with ignorant fear, though merely repeating, after another form, one of the most simple lessons of the dissecting-room. The operation, from the first incision through the skin, to the moment in which the ligatures are tightened round the artery, is matter of consultation. Each assistant thrusts his finger into the wound, to feel for the pulsations of the artery, to judge whether there is dan-



ger ; to advise with the surgeon when he approaches this critical point. Sound as the artery is on the fore part of the thigh, and natural as all the parts are, the dissection proceeds with cruel deliberation, and every interruption that ignorance and fear, and the impertinence of assistants could produce, in the most doubtful circumstances : Each assistant has his share in this simple dissection ; each must see the ligatures applied, each must feel them when drawn and tied ! I have seen that operation, which even a pretender in surgery should accomplish in seven minutes, hardly completed in an hour.

Is an operator of this order, LEARNING by EXPERIENCE to cut for the STONE ! called, all unprepared as he is, to perform on parts which he has never dissected, incisions which he has never practised on the dead body, he is justly alarmed at the greatness of the enterprize : Doubtful, and hesitating from the first moment, he invites each assistant in succession to torture that patient who has so much to endure ; to inflame the parts which are immediately to be wounded ; to turn and twist and strike with the staff. The staff itself he introduces from want of custom, not without the greatest difficulty and effusion of blood : But after he has made his dangerous incisions, not confident that he has wounded the bladder, and unable to feel or to grasp the stone, the confusion of the scene begins : Overcome with fear and doubt, he allows every assistant to thrust his finger into the wound ; invites the most incapable, the most awkward and cruel, in the surrounding group, to share in the responsibility that has fallen

upon him! Twenty fingers are thrust successively into the wound; assistant after assistant introduces the forceps, and grapples in vain with the stone! Often the incisions are too small, and often, dreadful to relate, the instruments have slipped, and the bladder itself intervenes betwixt the forceps and the stone. Every one turns and twists, and pulls in vain; each act of ineffectual cruelty but encourages more desperate exertions; till the surgeon, his heart failing as his patient's strength subsides, when those cruelties are found ineffectual, and the patient's cries are weaker, carries him to bed, and the spectators retire in silence from the scene.

Alas, Sir, this is not the city in which my description can be questioned: And if I refrain at present, from painting the horrors of this hour of suffering humanity, and all the consequences of this cruel policy, it is because it would but hurt my argument, and render my purpose suspicious. Are you prepared to deny?—will the managers of the Infirmary deny, that men have occupied that theatre for years, who know not the essentials of their profession; and are at this moment “occupied in performing on PARTS THEY HAVE NEVER DISSECTED! incisions which they have NEVER PRACTISED ON THE DEAD BODY?”

It is because he knows not where to find the femoral artery, or how to extract the stone, that such a Surgeon invites every assistant to thrust his finger into the wound, to feel for the artery, to try with the forceps, and become a participator of his guilt and shame. A good operator, whose knowledge of

science gives him a just confidence in himself, and a command of such a scene; dreads nothing so much as this assistance, and is too tender of his patient to allow of this delay. He knows his duty, and is prepared to perform it, at every risk, and, though polite, is resolute in declining all occasional advice. By foreseeing every thing, he provides for every thing; concerts all the parts of his operation in private with his assistant; appoints to each attendant his limited duty, beyond which he dare not move; while by his own manner he inspires confidence, and begets a composure, steadiness, and silence, in all around him.

I hope there are few who will not feel, that it is a cruel policy to induce every ignorant, busy attendant, to thrust his finger rudely into a recent, bleeding wound. But how, it will be said, could such a custom ever prevail: How could it be useful? Nothing so useful to a man conscious of ignorance, and depending on chance for his success, whose fears of disgrace exceed his hopes of reputation; who has to conciliate the spectators, in the moment of his confusion; and who must be prepared to stifle the public indignation by the testimony of numbers.

The assistants, at every disastrous operation, are to be assisted in return; every man seeking reputation by experience, has a feeling for his brother; and thus it happens, each calamitous operation has apologists, numerous, eager, and loquacious, in proportion to the tumult and horrors of the scene. The most palpable errors of ignorance and cowardice, are imputed to some natural or some preternatural cause. The artery is ever imbedded in diseased glands; the

stone is pursed up in some strange corner of the bladder, or inclosed in some preternatural sac: and, though from that sac, after an hour of brutal violence, it will not come forth, yet it drops out when the patient is put to bed, “*sua sponte!*” which signifies, in our vernacular and vulgar idiom, “of its own accord.” There ever is some obsequious adhesion, or amicable tumor, to interpose itself betwixt the Surgeon and his best purposes, when those are not fortunately accomplished.

Away with this *tromperie* of “diseased glands,” and “preternatural sacs:” It is not with the paltry contrivance that we are most offended, but with the impudence and confidence with which such miserable fictions are retailed,—fictions which the inventors know not how to vary in proportion to their sad necessities; which do not impose even on the most uneducated student. At last it has become manifest, that Clinical Lectures serve no other use than to invent Sacs and Glands, Adhesions and *Lusus Naturæ*, for the accommodation of young practitioners, learning by EXPERIENCE, and labouring for the good of the poor! who are abashed, from time to time, and discouraged by the most ordinary accidents of practice, merely because they have not learnt from the venerable Cullen, and his most apt pupil Dr Gregory, to make light of fatal disasters, and say, “Have we not seen *Pharsalia?*”

## SECTION IV.

Dr Gregory's homely theory about making Surgeons by EXPERIENCE! investigated: They do not make Surgeons so in London, Paris, Vienna, or Amsterdam.

The painful scenes, and disgraceful consequences, of appointing Apothecary Surgeons learning by Experience, to perform the Operations of a Hospital, in the Centre of a great Medical School: Dr Gregory's Scheme of Learning by Experience, i.e. *trying* Dissections on the Living Body, proves neither humane nor successful.

MUCH as you delight in rhetorical exhibitions and censorial duties, it will give you little pleasure, perhaps, that I demand new proofs of your skill, new criticisms in surgery, and new declamations in behalf of the poor. You cannot deny that I am entitled thus to call for new exertions of impartial calumny, of vigilant vindictive justice, against incapable or uncharitable surgeons: You cannot affect ignorance of the scenes that have been exhibited in the hospital, with which this city has rung from end to end; nor to be unconscious that the poor are not "assisted in their most need," (as I think you call it,) by men of the most tender feelings, or most accomplished education. But yet, I fear, however alarming the facts I may suggest, they will not excite the same fervour which you felt when tales of horror were related to you by your own best friends. I fear, Sir, we shall never more hear the lowing of your tormented ox; "*pecudesque locutæ infandum.*"



You cannot, Sir, be ignorant, that among the Surgeons of the Hospital, some from indolence, some from ignorance of the value of anatomical studies, some from a cruel unfeeling ambition, supported by your knavish theory of EXPERIENCE, are busy attempting operations on their fellow-creatures, which they have never tried on the dead body ! dissecting vessels and nerves they have never seen ! and, to use your own delicate language, “ carving, or trying to carve, a reputation out of the limbs of his Majesty’s Lieges.” And they have, by all accounts, earned a sort of reputation, which they will find it difficult, by any act of abdication, to make the public forget.

Your most favourite themes are not exhausted : I can assure you, that when you read over the roll of these surgeons, pupils of experience, and competitors for fame, you will find it difficult to make the inhabitants of this city believe that they are the surgeons for whom you cleared the way by such important volumes ! You will find that they are not accidentally young ! accidentally ignorant ! but that a system is adopted under your auspices, and which shall no longer be concealed from the world, ENSURING TO THE HOSPITAL AN UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION, “ OF THE YOUNGEST AND LEAST SKILFUL.”

I am not, like you, ignorant of surgery, nor a stranger to the operation-room of the Infirmary. I have not to cultivate, by flattery, the interests which a physician may be supposed to feel ; nor shall I ever, I trust, fall so low in public estimation, as to be thought envious of young gentlemen, so plainly LEARNING

by EXPERIENCE, and with such ill success. I am not like you, writing for a purpose temporary and selfish : I believe, and I know, that I am doing a good service to society, and explaining the true principles of my profession ; and therefore I proceed, with deliberate confidence, to illustrate my fixed principles by very extraordinary facts.

I blame no man, whose misfortune it is to be so born, and so educated, as never to know the value of study ; but I blame the ill regulated ambition, which leads such a man to court a public and responsible station ; and I abhor the principles of that person who seeks to acquire, by EXPERIENCE on a fellow-creature, one iota of that skill which he might obtain by safer and more conscientious methods.

Your theories and your practices are now come to an awful crisis. We are to examine the result of a TEN YEARS experiment, of acquiring skill by experience ; we are called on to enquire what the object could be of all Dr Gregory's politics. And, indeed, I should be at a loss to render credible the state of surgery, or the condition of the hospital in this city ; but by plainly stating this as a possible and probable cause : That we have had a physician, not much respected for honour or veracity, directing the Surgical Department ! and Copartneries of Apothecaries learning operations by EXPERIENCE ! and it is very fit, just, and becoming, that your coadjutors, having hoped to give the world conspicuous examples, should some how or other be rendered conspicuously useful. These were once, indeed, the best arrows in your quiver,—your surest voters in the Col-

lege, the busiest members of your intrigue ; but this transposition is not fortunate ; they were assuredly better qualified in their first office, as *machinæ gesticulantes* !

“ Hinc salit atque, *agili se sublevant incita motu*  
Vocesque emittit *tenuēs, et non sua verba.*”

Do not imagine, Sir, that I am so illiberal as to reproach the gentlemen who were, in the year 1801, prepared to run the race of experience and experiment, under your auspices, with the want of every needful talent. They were not much acquainted indeed with anatomy, nor very skilful in dissection ; and as for experience, it was the thing they came to seek. But in modesty and prudence, the first qualities of a surgeon, they certainly stand unrivalled.

The first and essential regulation they exacted of the Managers, was one which gave a happy omen of their future exhibitions. They insisted that the Managers should “ **INSIST** that the other members of the Royal College of Surgeons should not, on any account, make any remarks on their conduct or practice.” \*

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\* The following singular passage is extracted from the minutes of the Royal College of Surgeons ; and I confess that I have been at some pains to preserve in my *scrutoire* some other very extraordinary anecdotes.

#### EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

“ Your Committee however understood, that, in the most stretched view of the case, the Members of the College (with the  
4 c exception

This was indeed a proof of inimitable prudence and modesty, and shewed that there had been nothing left unprovided for, in the new experiment of learning operations by EXPERIENCE! It proved their care, not merely for the cultivation of science, but for the protection of SCIENTIFIC MEN of every description' and made it an object most desirable indeed for a YOUNG OPERATOR or any kind of Surgeon, to obtain a place in an hospital where such immunities were joined with such privileges: Where he could at once improve by experience on the poor, and operate, (if he could once reconcile his conscience to the experiment,) without any other kind of fear, and without reproach. Indeed, Sir, this was an admirable part of the system of learning opera-

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exception of the chosen few) were only precluded, by this removal of the interdict, from acting within the Hospital as *consulting or operating Surgeons*, and that any remaining privileges of the College within the Hospital continued un infringed, till a legal decision was obtained.

“ Under this impression, three of the Members of your Committee happened on the 2d instant, to meet together, as usual, in your consulting room, as well as certain other individuals of the College, but your Committee are satisfied, without the most distant intention of obtruding their advice on the attending Surgeons, or interfering with their practice.

“ The astonishment of the Members there present, other than the attending Surgeons, will be better conceived, therefore, than expressed, when a message from the Managers was brought up by their Treasurer and Clerk, and read openly in the consulting-room, of the following tenor:

“ The Managers hearing that several of the COLLEGE OF SUR-  
 “ GEONS are now in the CONSULTING-ROOM request those surgeons  
 “ to

tions by experience, affording all chances of reputation, with an absolute immunity from blame !

This is not the true principle of any public institution, or public duty. The Warrior, the Statesman, the Financier, when candidate for some weighty charge, offers his reputation as a pledge, and feels that, in proportion to the importance of that charge, a severe account will be exacted of him. A man high in power and station, holds that power at the peril of his reputation, or of his life. In my mind, the surgical department of an hospital should be delegated to those only who already know their duties, and have that reputation which, to a professional man, is dearer than life. to offer as a pledge : for, to professional men, reputation is dearer than

“ to withdraw, and leave the room for the use of the ACTING-SUR-  
 “ GEONS for whom it is intended ; as, according to the regulations  
 “ now established, NO PERSON HAS ACCESS TO THE CONSULTA-  
 “ TION-ROOM but the attending Physicians and Surgeons.

“ *Royal Infirmary, 2d January 1801.*”

“ Upon this occasion, Mr Wood thought it proper to demand  
 of the Managers, Whether they had also resolved to object to the  
 Members of the College walking the wards of the Hospital ?

“ The question not being immediately answered, Mr Wood and  
 Dr Harkness retired ; and, after twenty minutes deliberation, and  
 with the continued aid of their counsel, another card was brought  
 up in these terms :”

“ The Managers having heard Mr George Wood’s request, to  
 “ know whether the Managers meant to debar the Members of the  
 “ College of Surgeons from walking the wards ? they have to sig-  
 “ nify to them, that they have no objection to their doing so at the  
 “ usual



life: " You take my house, when you take that which doth sustain my house;" a crime of which you stand guilty towards numbers in this city.

A good surgeon, conscious that he is qualified for such a charge, offers himself to criticism freely: He cares not for malignant remarks, nor secret whisperings. Operating on a fair and public stage, where all his proofs of skill and courage, of deliberation and sagacity, are fairly balanced with those errors and misfortunes from which no human genius is exempt; he never doubts, that, after a series of public duties, his merits will be fairly balanced with his defects, and be reported with truth and candour; and I have observed, that if an operator be at all successful, (so much is the world charmed with any proofs of courage or skill) he is allowed more than his share of praise.

A good surgeon seeks no such immunities; he no more shrinks from public criticism than from public duties, of which the enduring criticism is the

" usual hours, only THEY INSIST ON what must appear absolutely  
 " necessary, THAT THEY and the other Members of the College of  
 " Surgeons, shall behave with proper respect and decorum to the  
 " attending Surgeons, SHALL NOT ON ANY ACCOUNT MAKE ANY  
 " REMARKS ON THEIR PRACTICE OR CONDUCT, or in any shape in-  
 " terfere with them in the discharge of their duty."

" Your Committee do not think it necessary to make any comment on the style and spirit of those communications, and shall only observe, that had the Managers even been correct, in point of law and form, one respectable body of men, in addressing another equally respectable, might, without much research, have found language more suitable to the occasion."

severest part: The petulance of envious men have no terrors for him, and cannot unnerve him in a moment of danger: With his assistant and his dressers around him, and five hundred impartial young men, witnesses of his operation, although assailed with the sharp remarks of his brethren, he would smile at their jealous cavilings, and defy calumny.

This is not the principle of any public institution, especially of a hospital, the wards of which are open, the actors in the scene as entirely amenable to public opinion as the galleries of a theatre, or the halls of a court of justice. The theatre of the Infirmary is professedly the place where the doctrines of a great school are illustrated by practice; and where, I am sorry to say, strangers form their opinion of our proficiency in surgical science. And when, in so sacred a place, instead of impressive lessons of skill and courage, scenes are exhibited which affect very deeply the feelings of the public; no regulation of this nature could ensure secrecy, or protect the offenders. There is no protection but professional excellence, which even in a man otherwise brutal or unfeeling, never fails to command admiration and respect.

Has the profit of this singular enactment counterbalanced the shame? Have the Managers of the Infirmary been able, virtually, to confer this inestimable privilege? No, Sir, the responsibility of every ignorant fool, who blunders unaware upon an abyss, stops short in the extirpation of an inguinal gland, undertaken from want of prudence, or unaccomplished for want of skill! Every surgeon whose

patient, after amputation, dies of hæmorrhagy, who, in performing that operation, ties the arteries before he saws the bone ! who puts a man to death by a protracted horrible process, for no other crime than having the stone ! feels himself responsible, and accounts, too, in person, or by proxy, by direct or “ round-about ways,” \* accounts publicly to hundreds of students for every thing.

There is a very singular fact come to light of late years, and the discoverers of the fact deserve very public honours : It is a fact which a great philosopher like you should not remain ignorant of. Would you believe it, Sir, the physical conformation of the Scottish peasantry and artizans is actually beginning to assume a singular character, from our very peculiar modes of surgery ? Why, Sir, the patients, almost all the patients of the Edinburgh hospital, are full of SACS ! and ADHESIONS ! and unexpected TUMOURS ! Our Hospital is famed for LUSUS NATURÆ ! and not a patient is now supposed to die a natural or a *surgical death* !

In the olden times, deaths were imputed to the unwholesome air of crowded hospitals ; but now they are more sudden, and are known to arise always, from some SUPERNATURAL CAUSE. Stones, which were reported, once in a century, to ADHERE to the bladder, or to be buried in a SAC, adhere now, in our Infirmary, with a perverseness and obstinacy

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\* These ROUND ABOUT WAYS ! shall be presently illustrated by a piece of poetry, more extraordinary than any of those for which our Professor of Practice is so justly celebrated.

peculiar to our climate ! and very many times, when the operator would most willingly have taken them out, and has proved his good intentions by the sweat of his brow ; nay, even after he has repeatedly declared, and experimentally demonstrated to the spectators, that he had the said calculi fast clenched in the fangs of his iron forceps, of course naked of every sac, they have, nevertheless, been known to retreat into cavities of their own, and been found involved in a preternatural sac *after death* !

One question more, and I have done : Had such a law been enacted in favour of Mr John Bell, while he operated in the Royal Infirmary, would it have availed him ? Would it have restrained you, or have prevented these wretched tattling tales by which you endeavoured to ruin his reputation ? \* Would it have prevented you reminding the inhabitants of this city, that Mr Benjamin Bell was a man of the most compassionate and tender feelings, “and he thought exactly as you did about the sufferings of the poor ?” That he was a man of the most liberal dispositions, and, “that he or his copartnership would not spend a thought upon Mr John Bell ?” That as for Mr John Bell, “rather than receive a man of such inhuman dispositions into their houses, or any who agreed with him in sentiments, the inhabitants of this city had better receive as many mad dogs ?”

I assure you, Sir, that in any circumstances, I should have declined the protection of such a law, and should have been sorry had it prevented those eloquent and refined addresses to my fellow-citizens, which I take a pleasure in repeating, and with which you have

been delightfully occupied, and to your friends profitably, for ten years. I have sat the while, calmly enjoying the honours of the siege; and have deliberately observed and estimated your skill in calumny, and the effects of your invective. Surely, Sir, you have over rated your talents, from the delight you feel in exercising them? But your reproaches, though “full of sound and fury,” signify nothing, and are attended with so little danger, that you may blow your horns, not seven times only, but seventy times seven, round the city, without shaking the walls of any man’s reputation.

You would make Surgeons by experience! they do not make them so in London, Berlin, Paris or Vienna: They make no Surgeons by experience in Copenhagen or Amsterdam. If, indeed, Surgeons were to be made in Calcutta, and not exported, it would be necessary to make them by experience! i. e. by learning upon the living body, for in that climate, they could not learn upon the dead body: But whether the East, being the officina gentium, could afford a mode of education so costly of human life, I do not pretend to know. We are told by Lord Lauderdale, that “the Rajah of Tanjore, reduced by the rapacious inventions of the East India Company to the state of a mere pensionary, had become quite a philosopher. The exports to this court, instead of consisting as formery of costly furniture, were limited last year to one simple but useful invention,—A MODEL OF CORK AND WOOD, displaying the BONES and VEINS of a HUMAN BODY, for the purpose of enabling him to prosecute his favourite study of ANATO-



MY."\* Buy a machine, Sir, and set it up behind the operation-room ; and let every Surgeon of that great school, go a little beyond the catechism of names you have spoken of, and be at least as good an anatomist as the Rajah of Tanjore.

You are right, Sir, let Surgeons learn by experience, they can have no other kind of education in this city : Yet, I do say, they make no Surgeons by experience in London, Paris, or Vienna. It is an actionable and most dangerous occupation, to attempt to benefit the human race by acquiring skill, or learning anatomy, on any thing but CORK AND WOOD ! unless it be upon LIVING BODIES. In Dr Monro's class, unless there be a fortunate succession of bloody murders, not three subjects are dissected in the year. On the remains of a subject fished up from the bottom of a tub of spirits, are demonstrated those delicate nerves, which are to be avoided or divided in our operations ; and these are demonstrated once at the distance of one hundred feet ! nerves, and arteries, which the Surgeon has to dissect, at the peril of his patient's life.

Cork and wood, Sir, are cleanly and precious materials, and have an infinite resemblance to bones and tendons, and muscles and nerves, compared with this apparition, this proxy. Yet, even so do they teach anatomy ; even thus have you learned the structure of the brain and liver, and viscera, for the diseases of which you prescribe. But you make a just dif-

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\* Lord Lauderdale on India Affairs, p. 45.

ference, curiously metaphysical : Having been taught anatomy by proxy, you prescribe by proxy ; it is no question, a privilege you have acquired by your peculiar mode of education, but though a just, it is a very malicious revenge.

Is this, Sir, the way in which parts should be studied, which are to be the subjects of operation ? Is not the human body complex, and its parts delicate and curious ? Is the structure of that machine, on whose disorders we are to reason, so coarse, its action and mechanism so palpable, that we can understand them by a slight and transient glance ? Not a leaf nor a flower is more delicate, not an insect more curious in its structure, than the eye, the ear, the mouth, the throat ! and yet, we are to comprehend the structure and forms of those parts by hearing about them ! and to reason and operate on those parts upon the faith of description.

I can imagine, how, in the “ windy and wordy school of Edinburgh,” a man may become a chemist, a philosopher, a metaphysician ; but how a physician, how he can be initiated in the principles of a science, whose basis is the structure of the animal frame, and all the difficult and deep philosophy connected with our material form,—I know not. Far less can I conceive how he can become a Surgeon, who has not been taught anatomy, who seldom sees a subject, whose appointed instructors know little of surgical science : No way can I imagine, but by departing with original boldness, from the habits of all around him, and devoting himself for years to anatomy, and its practical applications ; in which he

must be his own instructor. I come back, Sir, to your great principle of learning by practice, a practical art, with this slight difference, that I would NOT PRACTISE BY PROXY! I would not LEARN UPON THE LIVING BODY.

I have sometimes amused myself with imagining the influence of Dr Gregory's doctrines in regard to experience, being extended to the fine arts; and with imagining him as busy a patron and reformer of an Academy of Artists as of a College of Surgery. I really believe, that if he could persuade an Academy of Artists to trust to EXPERIENCE for their acquirements; induce painters to relinquish the study of nature, and the masters; and musicians to renounce the study of keys, and cadences, and the temperament of the scales; and confirm them in their choice, by assuring them that he and his very dearest friends despised all those refinements of science, and relied on the INFALLIBLE OLD EXPERIENCE. Though he and his adventurous friends were the most execrable performers in existence, they would soon at least have no rivals to contend with, and would live to see those who might have been such, adorning ale-houses with red lions and dragons, or earning money and reputation in practising MUSIC, and still improving their talents by unremitting PRACTICE on the EARTHEN-MOUND, to the great annoyance of all comers and goers. Then might the said reformer of the fine arts flourish with his friends, fearless and unrivalled, perfectly conscious that the performer on the violin on the said conspicuous stage, were as stationary in his science, as his rival

the performer on the barrel-organ ; both being performers as HIGHLY CULTIVATED AS EXPERIENCE could make them ; though they should grind and scrape, not only while the mound lasted, but while the firmament endured.

Now, Sir, I will no longer talk magnificently of distant cities, of Amsterdam, and Copenhagen, and Paris, and Vienna ; let us speak of London, where I affirm surgeons are not made by EXPERIENCE. In that city there are hundreds of good surgeons, who have had no opportunities “ of carving a reputation out of the limbs of his Majesty’s lieges ;” and the converse is equally true, that you could, with very little experience, make every London surgeon an operator ; for every surgeon there begins his studies with that of anatomy.

Mr Cooper, Mr Cline, Mr Lynn, Mr Home, Dr Bailly, every man in past or present times, who has acquired celebrity in that city, began his education in that true school of practice, the dissecting room. Ask these gentlemen, to which of all their studies they ascribe their address in operation, or excellence in medical science ? Ask the world, Why they rest their confidence on these men ? and the reply must be, “ On account of their perfect acquaintance with the structure of the human body.”

Mr Astley Cooper, Mr Abernethy, Dr Baillie, and many others, have had the choice of their plan of education ; but they would, I believe, be very much amused with your simplicity, if, in conversation, you were to betray such ignorance of their education, as to imagine that they had come to Edinburgh, attend-

ed your lectures, Dr Black's and Dr Home's, taken two tickets for Dr Monro's class, heard him for two successive courses talk about anatomy, and seen three dissections of dead bodies, at the respectable distance of fifty feet, and then returned to London to become by EXPERIENCE great physicians, and GREAT OPERATORS !

Believe me, Sir, though their education would, even then, have been somewhat better than that of your best friends and most experienced Operators, London is not exactly the place to which they would have resorted, to exhibit accomplishments and talents acquired in such a course of study. All the operating, and all the thinking men of that metropolis, have been bred in the true practical school, and not in learning and dissecting on the living body, (an occupation in which, one would imagine, that even the most fearless, relentless surgeon, would learn very little, and that little very slowly,) but on the dead body.

In short, Sir, the institutions of Edinburgh are by no means favourable to the cultivation of surgical talents; and in that period of your medical school, in which these studies should have been cultivated with particular zeal; they have, by the patrons of the school been notoriously neglected. The defects of this system may deserve further notice, on some future occasion, if the university should long survive the neglect of the most essential studies. I must in the meanwhile observe one or two things, which, in a year or two, will produce consequences as conspicuous, and as singular, as ever have been observed in a flourishing school of medicine.



FIRST, The character of the school has changed remarkably; and instead of medical schisms and disputations, we have nothing but the low intrigues and quarrels of practice.

SECOND, In an age when young men are sent early into the world, upon the active duties of their profession, that branch of science which is most essential to give them a just confidence in themselves, the ANATOMY of the HUMAN BODY, is not a favourite study.

THIRDLY, It happens, unfortunately, that in our hospital, men are brought forward to perform the most difficult operations, who are by education and talents mere APOTHECARIES, and who are not yet at least men of EXPERIENCE.

FOURTHLY, That the doctrine of learning surgery by experience, is publicly taught by an intriguing Professor, whose veracity is protested, whose principles are not esteemed as very "*pure*, or very *honourable*," unless by pure and honourable be meant "the pure love of gold," a solution which has been invented by one of the most subtle practical metaphysicians of the present age.

FIFTH, That the alliances which this physician found most convenient and profitable, have brought him acquainted with a democracy of surgeons, as madly desirous of experience as ever the French people were of freedom, and as little prepared to profit by the change.

SIXTH, That after long DISHONEST DECLAMATIONS of this Professor, about the YOUTH and INEX-

PERIENCE ! the promiscuous attendance and alleged inhumanity ! of the gentlemen performing the duties of the Infirmary, with much zeal, and with much talent ; the surgeons of the hospital are now, at once the least remarkable for AGE ! EDUCATION ! TALENTS ! or EXPERIENCE !—And the duties of the hospital are solely performed by the FOUR INFIRMARY CLERKS, who performed under my eye, very different duties in the days of the intrigue. Mr George Bell, Mr John Thompson, Mr Peter Erskine, Mr William Newbigging, assisted by Mr William Wood, son of Mr Andrew Wood, as CONSULTING SURGEON !

You have contracted an unhappy custom, Sir, of denying every thing you wish to deny, as you affirm every thing you find it convenient to affirm. Your infirmity is confusion, without hesitation ! You stick at nothing, but are so confused withal as to imagine, that denying a thing is a sure means of making it be disbelieved. You will deny these facts, though some of the most humiliating of them are in very incontestible gazettes : \* But you must get one or two friends, in future, to affirm or deny along with you, among which affirmations yours will always stand as a negative quantity. These not only are facts, Sir, but such facts as must make every other fact credible that is related concerning the surgical department of the Edinburgh school. These, Sir, are

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\* Vide Infirmary Lists in the Almanack for the years 1809, 1810.

facts, with which every student is prepossessed before he comes to this school, and the first exhibitions he sees of surgical skill, seldom fail to confirm his prejudices.

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## SECTION V.

The EXPERIMENT of making Surgeons by EXPERIENCE begins to attract the Public Notice : Some of those learning Surgery by Experience, become Improvers of Science, and invent New Operations, and prove them by Experience on the Patients in the Royal Infirmary.

The Success of those New Inventions celebrated in Hymns, actually excelling the Poetical Effusions of the Professor of Practice.

It happens unfortunately, that among the many gentlemen learning by experience, some have been struck with the unaccountable ambition of being improvers of the science. And although an hospital is the very last place \* in which

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\* When a young surgeon projects "A new, safe, and expeditious Operation," those who voluntarily submit themselves to serve as examples of his skill, are his fair subjects ; but when *experiments* are to be practised in an hospital, leave should be requested of the Managers, and the proposal submitted by them to a College or some other constituted body, or to some committee of professional men, for their approbation.

these gentlemen should be permitted to realise their dreams of imaginary excellency, such EXPERIMENTS have been permitted, and have ended most tragically.

There are occasions in which it may be meritorious to invent new operations, and justifiable to prove them even upon the living body : And when a man, versed in his art, who has often experimentally felt the dangers of ordinary methods, reasons and reflects upon those difficulties, and invents a new operation ; his years, his experience, and his acknowledged skill, give authority for the trial : In performing it himself, he gives to the world this pledge of good faith and honesty, that he stakes a well earned reputation for his success, and exposes himself eventually to disgrace and ruin. But when a man, unknown in his profession, unaccustomed with operations, who has never felt the defects of common methods, who has a thousand secret reasons for imputing his occasional ill success, to other causes than the ill construction of instruments ; proposes new schemes ! it would become the Managers of an hospital to forbid such novelties in their theatre, or to receive them at least with prudent reserve. The example I proceed to state can be no way injurious to one who has RENOUNCED SURGERY ; and it may be useful to the world.

The celebrated Mr Chesselden, in place of studying lithotomy by EXPERIENCE, *i. e.* by operating on living bodies, studied it so successfully on the dead body, as to be able to cut with perfect precision with the knife : He needed no bungling con-

trivances of grooved instruments, and conductors, sliding sometimes very smoothly along one another, but *sometimes sliding off*! an accident which, when it does happen, is almost invariably fatal. This gentleman's success was such, that not more than ONE out of TWENTY of his patients died; he took hardly THREE MINUTES to perform his incisions, and extract the stone! and his little narrative stands as a lasting reproach to those incapable people, who are to this day eternally inventing new instruments, only because they know not how to use the old. For reasons not yet assigned, one of your Surgeons, learning by EXPERIENCE, thought fit to publish the simple and most interesting narratives of Cheselden, as a very fit introduction to "A NEW PROPOSAL," founded on very opposite principles, indeed, and attended with very different successes.

It was one of the pupils of your school of EXPERIENCE, that republished this tract; and although he had neither, like the very witty Professor Gregory, "adorned it with a preface, nor enriched it with notes," he yet entitled it "OBSERVATIONS ON LITHOTOMY, by J. T\*\*\*." This gentleman, after a life of busy, restless intrigue, in collusion with you and your worst associates, had procured himself to be elected surgeon of the Infirmary; and, indeed, considering his "virtuous indignation" against those whom you traduced so diligently, and "that very high degree of virtue, the more to be esteemed that such examples are rare,"\* he was every way entitled to a

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\* Vide this cunning creature's Memorial, in which he thus recommends his busiest intriguing Infirmary Clerks.



conspicuous station in your hospital: It is the use he has made of it we are now to enquire into.

The time appointed having arrived, in which he was to exhibit as a great operator, he reprinted this little tract of Chesselden's, for the purpose of ADVERTISING something very different from a book, for the purpose of announcing a "PROPOSAL for a NEW, EASY, AND SUCCESSFUL METHOD OF CUTTING FOR THE STONE."

Having but perplexed notions of all that he had been reading about Lithotomy, he imagined that it was safer and easier to thrust a BLUNT instrument into the bladder, along the staff, from which a blunt instrument is liable upon the slightest awkwardness to slip aside, than to guide a SHARP INSTRUMENT, which, in the hand of a real operator, i. e. of an anatomist, and a man of courage, will always open its way direct into the bladder. Believing that he could, in some piddling way, run a BLUNT instrument along the groove of the staff, without danger of its slipping aside, he announced this! as a "New, easy, and successful method of cutting for the Stone:" and proceeded straightway to the bloody trial.

Little did the public imagine, when reading in every newspaper, day after day, this splendid ADVERTISEMENT in capital letters, that this "PROPOSAL FOR A NEW MANNER OF CUTTING FOR THE STONE," was *proposed* in two paragraphs, which two paragraphs constituted the whole quota of the inventor's share of the book!—the "OBSERVATIONS ON LITHOTOMY!" And little did the profession apprehend, that such a wretched expedient as thrusting a blunt and grooved probe, in place of a sharp gorget or

knife, along the groove of staff\*, should be substituted to the operation of Lithotomy. But on Sunday the 5th of July 1808, this fatal experiment was performed, which I shall relate in the words of a spectator.

“ The lateral operation of Lithotomy was performed this day, July 5th 1808 by Dr T\*\*\*\*\*, on a man of the name of Walker. Dr T\*\*\*\*\* began by introducing the grooved staff about 20 minutes past 12 o'clock. The patient's hands and feet, were then secured by the tapes, when he began an incision below the scrotum, and continued it for about three inches downwards. At 23 minutes after twelve, the incisions being made at several strokes inwards, towards the groove of the staff, he took a kind of STRAIGHT DIRECTOR, and, as far as I could judge, *haggled* it into the GROOVE OF THE STAFF. Having done this, and withdrawn the staff from the urethra, he took the scalpel, and cut along this director † into the bladder, as if upwards: He then removed the knife, and took a blunt gorget, and ran

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\* This operation, and I appeal to every gentleman in Glasgow, is an obsolete invention of old Mr Dunlop of that city.

† This director, if it was fairly lodged *in the bladder*, was no better than the staff: If in this “ *haggling*,” it slipped off from the groove of the staff, and was lodged *without the bladder, and behind it*, it was destructive; for, by cutting along such a conductor, the scalpel could not but make a cavity, into which the forceps being admitted, would grasp the stone with the bladder intervening, and the *operator*, and all the operators around him, might pull for ever without delivering the stone. In this very ex-

it along the director; which last he then removed, and pushed the gorget up, using at the same time great force, which made the patient cry out hideously.

He then took the forceps, groped and *bungled* for the stone, but could not get at it. He then took up at one time the knife, and *mangled away with it*; at another time, he *tried* the director: Then he would take his fingers, and *bore* them violently upwards; then he tried the introducing of the staff, at one time into the urethra, and then into the wound itself: And thinking he felt the stone, he would again push in the forceps, *and search about for it*, but all in vain; the patient all the while crying out, and suffering the most dreadful agony, scarcely to be described."

"Having proceeded in this manner for twenty-two minutes from the first incisions, he gave it up

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traordinary operation, there were innumerable chances against even a man of skill succeeding. For the urethra being occupied entirely with the staff, a second staff, especially a blunt one, could not be received into the urethra: There are a thousand chances, that, even in a skillful hand, it would slip aside; that it would be a false conductor to the knife; that it would make a wound behind the bladder; that the gorget or second conductor, run along this straight staff, would, though driven with extreme violence, never reach the bladder: that the forceps run along this blunt gorget, would lie on the outside of the bladder; and, that though the stone were siezed, it would be easier to tear out the bladder, and intestines, than to extract the stone. To overcome the resistances of the stone, and the natural adhesions of the parts to the bones of the pelvis, must be impossible.

quite exhausted, and in a profuse perspiration, to Dr Brown, who next endeavoured to extract the stone, and continued his efforts during twelve minutes more, \* but in vain.

“ During this time, Dr Hay and Mr George Wood beckoned on the operator to speak with them; but *being much agitated*, and hesitating whether to go for some little time, *he at last went*; and, having consulted with them, and received their advice, he *again* returned to the patient, and *endeavoured to* extract the stone, but without avail. The time now wanting three minutes of one o’clock, and thirty-one minutes having elapsed from the introduction of the staff, the patient almost all the time in excruciating torture, Dr T\*\*\*\*\* came forward, and declared to the students, that he, along with several of the other gentlemen present, had repeatedly felt the stone previous to the operation, by sounding, but that he could not now find it, either with his fingers or with any other instrument; and that the stone had *now receded*! and that it was *best* to put the man to bed! and that probably the stone would come out *SUA SPONTE*.† Thus did this horrible scene terminate.”

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\* Twelve minutes is a space of time exceeding that in which a good Lithotomist would perform two operations.

† That any stone bred in the bladder should be so malicious and cunning as to adhere, in spite of every kind of violence, to the disgrace of the surgeon, and yet, after a competent time, separate from its adhesion, and descend from its sac “*SUA SPONTE*” for its own individual honour, is a thing so nefarious, that were I to advise the

Take notice, Sir, I give the ipsissima verba of a spectator! but, far from desiring to shelter myself under any authority, I affirm the facts: I affirm, that some of your MANAGERS witnessed this scene, which they described to me in expressions more impressive than those of this young gentleman, and

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MANAGERS of the Royal Infirmary, it should be, that in place of the proclamation, "That no observations should be made on the conduct of their surgeons," they should make a new enactment, "That HENCEFORWARD, NO STONE, which had wilfully and maliciously resisted the solicitation, and ALL the violence of ALL the operators of that distinguished charity, should be permitted to descend SUA SPONTE." That most especially it should not be permitted to descend "SUA SPONTE" in a dark closet in the dead of night, but fairly and openly in the OPERATION-ROOM, in the midst of those spectators who come to see it so DESCEND, and who would be most willing to return at any appointed hour to see it descend "SUA SPONTE."

This accommodating humour must be peculiar to some stones: I know, by experience, that it is not the natural disposition of all stones; for when the operator, either by some slight negligence, does not know of the existence of a second stone, or has not promised that it shall descend "SUA SPONTE," though the opening is large enough for the extraction of the first stone, the second never thinks of descending "SUA SPONTE."

For example: One unhappy patient was cut for the stone by the gentleman who is next to exhibit as a Lithotomist, assisted by Mr James Russel. One stone was, somehow or other, delivered. The patient languished and died, after a few days of fever and suffering, merely because the second or remaining stone, as perverse in its way as any of those we have lately heard of, would not, at least did not, descend "SUA SPONTE." The drawing of this stone, and the surrounding parts, is in my volume on Lithotomy; the preparation is in the possession of Mr Russel, who can best tell by what kind of ADHESIONS it was prevented from descending "SUA SPONTE."



with an air and manner, on the very day after this butchery, implying that they were horror-struck with the scene. I moreover affirm, Sir, that this is no rare specimen of the surgery of THIS SCHOOL OF EXPERIENCE ! that I have seen this scene many times. Nay, Sir, I affirm, that it is more common to see this operation, the greatest unquestionably, but yet the most simple in surgery, protracted for three quarters of an hour, than accomplished in five minutes, the longest period that any man of real skill or professional courage would require.

Will the Managers now doubt, that, by you and your politic associates, the public ear is grossly abused ; or pretend to repel the accusation of their Hospital being made a scene of EXPERIMENTS for the decision of “ New Proposals for safe and expeditious methods of Cutting for the Stone :” and worse, of the endless and inhuman EXPERIMENT of training young surgeons, unacquainted with anatomy, and altogether unskilled in dissection, to become operators by EXPERIENCE ?

What can give to any such attempt the character of an experiment ? In that hospital, where the rumour of trying experiments is odious, one of your surgeons, not of high reputation for skill or courage in operating ; not conspicuously entitled to become a reformer of science ; announces, in the stile peculiar to all your friends ! in a column of advertisement, and a page of pamphlet, a “ NEW PROPOSAL for CUTTING for the STONE ;” and dares, without a licence from any faculty ; without the sanction of any society ; without appealing to the College of Sur-

geons; without any public dissection of subjects, or any sentence of men of science, as the custom has ever been in other countries; without demanding or obtaining the approbation of those appointed to watch over the safety of the poor,—attempts an experiment which savours indeed much more of novelty than of safety; or, if any thing is safe from such a projector, it is the stone; cuts the patient after some piddling and timid manner, running conductor after conductor, one blunt instrument after another, from sheer incapacity and fear of using a knife safely, gets into inextricable confusion, loses all presence of mind, perspires with agony and cruel labour, never reaches the bladder, never grasps the stone, yet never, for one moment, ceases to inflict unavailing torture, till, in shame and confusion, after the fingers and forceps of many assistants have been driven into the wound, puts an end to the barbarous scene, and commits the patient to bed.

I know, Sir, the cunning invidious argument which men like you, and culprits like this, will bring against me: I shall be accused of want of humanity, and want of candour, in disclosing such a scene; but if I have told one word of truth, it was no secret; many a humane and feeling person in this city was much agitated with what he heard; the tragedy was witnessed by many young men, not bound by any injunctions of silence, and too proud of their native cities, not to contrast such operations with those they have seen in London, and Liverpool, and Leeds, and Dublin, and Cork. It is not the report made up for your infirmary books, nor the singular things

discovered in dissection, nor the lecture that generally follows such an operation, about ADHESIONS and SACS ! that can deceive the many well informed spectators, whose feelings and senses have been overcome with the scene,—A scene reported in other countries, in language which no inhabitant of this city could hear of without confusion and shame.

Nor will I allow you the weak defence so natural to cunning men. I will not leave you the pretext for alleging personal malice. This, though it were malice towards an individual, is mercy to thousands: But it is no malice: This gentleman's experiments are, thank God, at an end: He addresses the following NOTE, in the old advertising stile, to those who may choose to have a more favourable opinion of his judgment than his skill.

### CIRCULAR ADVERTISEMENT.

“ SIR,

“ I take the liberty of informing you, that I HAVE RESOLVED TO DECLINE, in future, the PRACTICE ! of the OPERATIVE part of SURGERY, and to direct my attention solely to *cases of disease* requiring CONSULTATION. \*

“ Any mark of your confidence in THAT LINE ! will be esteemed an honour by, SIR,

Your most obedient.”

This, Sir, is a perfect piece: It has its beginning, middle, and end: The denouement, the catas-

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\* The words printed in capitals, are so printed in the original HAND-BILL.

trophe, the moral, are all most striking and instructive. This is the experimentum erucis of your system. This gentleman showed no unwillingness to become an operator by EXPERIENCE, learning upon the living body: He was little known as an operator when he proclaimed to the world this NEW, SAFE, and EXPEDITIOUS METHOD of CUTTING for the STONE. He either attempted an experiment not very successful, or he had invented one highly interesting to humanity! If it be an experiment not very successful, how dared he to repeat it? If one highly interesting to the profession, why did he resign the character of an operator, at the moment in which his skill and talents became conspicuous, and his course of charitable and useful duties as a surgeon, were just happily begun? One thing more, Sir, I cannot refrain from remarking; that while these notable operators were labouring and prospering, pulling in succession to deliver the patient of the stone, any well educated and experienced operator could have remedied all that was wrong by one STROKE OF HIS KNIFE! and have extracted, WITHOUT VIOLENCE, a stone so circumstanced as to fall out of its OWN ACCORD.

In representing a scene which was witnessed by hundreds, and from which any spectator, seeing such marks of incapacity and confusion might well have run out, wild and distracted, into the streets, to call for help, even though it had been but an animal that lay under such agony, I am guilty of no malice! The character of an operator who has thus publicly resigned, cannot be injured! I do not depreciate those talents by which this gentleman is

to support himself in the world ! There is, perhaps, something meritorious in his voluntary resignation, though surely there was something rash in the expedient by which he first sought to establish his fame : and, there is unquestionable proof of the sinfulness of your doctrine of learning by EXPERIENCE.

This gentleman was, perhaps, better qualified than most of your other élèves to become an operator ; and had he found that he could by experience become a great operator, that being a character which he manifestly aspired to, it is one which he would not willingly have resigned. I therefore quote with confidence this conspicuous example, of one trusting too fearlessly in your doctrine, believing that any man, and every man, may, by experience, become an operator ! “ Believing, (to use the language of scripture,) that he had a good conscience.”

This shows the value of cultivated talents ; the importance of character in a public station, though it were no more than as a pledge to be forfeited by misconduct. With men trusting to experience, trying to acquire reputation, scenes like this occasion perhaps a momentary pang, a sense of shame and public dishonour, soon obliterated by more flagrant faults in the conduct of their successors and compeers ; but, to a man of reputation, it would be a disgrace and ruin. This patient survived by miracle, but the EXPERIMENT was repeated, and the boy died ! In three successive Sundays, three promising and healthy patients were cut for the stone, by three several operators : The three patients died !—The Lord Pro-



vost of this city can best tell the sensation which those disasters produced. \*

Without naming those three operators, I have one question to put to you,—Yes, Sir, to you pointedly, as the clamorous advocate of the poq;,—the INVENTOR of that system, by which the FOUR INFIRMARY CLERKS are now the FOUR INFIRMARY SURGEONS; the person who protested against the incessant rotations of young surgeons: Of you, Sir, I ask “What system of attendance can explain the rotation of THREE SEVERAL LITHOTOMISTS on three successive Sabbaths?” I call upon you to name these gentlemen, and to convince the inhabitants of this city, that they are the OLDEST, the most RESPECTABLE, the most DEXTROUS OPERATORS! and I challenge your reply to this dilemma: Bad as these surgeons are, unfortunate as their practice has been, there must be some distinction even among the most incapable men! Why, then, this rotation of surgeons? Are they playing a game of chance, where they may throw again and again as often as they are unsuccessful, and stake another and another life, for the CHANCE OF REPUTATION?

In consideration of your extreme ignorance of surgery, I must farther remind you; that this is an operation so simple, the man who can perform it,

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\* The Letter addressed by the relations of the last of these unhappy people has not been made very public. His Lordship, Mr Coulter the Hosier, says, that the operator has perfectly SATISFIED HIM, and JUSTIFIED HIMSELF, and has entirely explained the ACCIDENT.

is so sure of his stroke, that five minutes is the utmost limits of the time he would require to complete it: I must inform you, moreover, Sir, that protracted pain is cruelty, in the first instance, and in the end, death, by causing inflammation. That in one of those operations, AN HOUR was spent in dreadful efforts before the stone was delivered. I must inform you, that the operation, when performed by Raw, Cheselden, or Dease, in the hospitals of Amsterdam, London, or Dublin, was so successful, that the proportion of deaths was one only out of twenty patients. That by all the computations which our profession have ever acknowledged, “not more than three or four patients out of forty should die.” A heavy responsibility then lies with the successors of these operators: To restore this hospital to any respectability, they must cut for the stone, without losing man or boy for ten or fifteen years.

True, Sir, most true, I have been drawn into invective, both general and passionate: But the passion that animates me, is the truth of what you have feigned, a sincere respect for my profession, and an abhorrence of cruelty, and a true feeling for the sufferings of the poor. My invectives are against a system, suspicious in its origin, and demonstrated, in its tragical results, to be most cruel. I but declare what every considerate person should be apt to suspect, viz., that the doctrines of a physician, in regard to surgery; the inventions of an intriguing practitioner, providing, according to their known capacities, for his surgical friends, could not be very sound! That a course of learning surgery by

EXPERIENCE, is in truth but a course of most UN-PRINCIPLED EXPERIMENTS, not likely to be either boldly or successfully performed amidst scenes of blood and danger, by those who have not, from use and education, the true sources of courage.

You might, Sir, as well expect skill in a man who had never handled a weapon, or courage in one exposed to inevitable death; you might as well expect to make men musicians by hearing music, or affirm that those must be astronomers who daily behold the sun, moon, and stars,—as expect men to become anatomists by hearing about anatomy! surgeons, by seeing operations! or physicians, by being hired to witness the common calamities of death and sickness, and take a seeming interest in the closing scene! without knowing any thing of the structure of that machine, whose motions and materials are about to be suspended and resolved into dust.

I must again tell you, what hundreds have witnessed, what hundreds, I fear, are destined still to see, to the dishonour of our country,—that all your great operations have this character of experiments; that misfortunes, frequent and calamitous, produce no sensations but those which we must be ashamed and alarmed to think of: That assistants and spectators look on with the true passion of cool curiosity, enquiring who is to perform the operation, and wondering how it will go on: That spectators and students assemble, not with the confident expectation of seeing an operation admirably performed, but with an expectation of seeing something singular, and often behold such scenes as either dissatisfy them

with the profession, or blunt the best feelings of nature.

The assistants, in place of being impressed with reverence for the approaching sufferings of the patient, or the solemnities of the scene; in place of taking their places in silence, expecting confidently the relief of that patient, and the proofs of the operator's skill, feel chiefly a restless, impatient curiosity. The stone is searched for, or the disease examined by many surgeons — So the scene opens: and no sooner is the operation begun, than they become engaged as parties in the operation, groping with their fingers to assist, or examining to take cognizance of facts, preparing by their testimony to vindicate, some future day, the trepidating operator. These busy assistants find themselves in a moment responsible for advices hastily suggested, and ill executed; and for all the steps of an operation which should be performed by the operator alone: And whether his vindication is to rest on the assertion of the artery which should have been tied, being too deeply involved among diseased glands; or the intestinal hernia which should have been reduced, ADHERING to its SAC; or the stone which should have been extracted having lain concealed, (until it dropped out “*sua sponte*,”) in some strange CORNER of the BLADDER! or in some preternatural CAVITY. These are to be his witnesses. Singular witnesses to very singular facts!

Every cruelty of a needful and dangerous operation, is protracted by their clamorous assistance; every danger aggravated by this tumultuous interference, every error of the surgeon made but the more conspicuous by the means he takes to conceal it;

every dangerous occurrence, in place of affording a conspicuous proof of courage, and an impressive lesson to younger surgeons, produces an unseemly scene of tumult and alarm: Circumstances, calculated to raise contempt and ridicule, are so mixed with those sufferings which should excite sympathy, that the best feelings of the heart are lost, till at last disorderly and ignorant conduct has become the established character of all the doings in the hospital, and the barbarous surgery of this city has become a standing reproach.

If there be one word of truth in all that I have said, this is indeed scene to pause upon: The fate of the poor, the fate of any human creature exposed to such dangers, to the pains and terrors of an operation, unsuccessful from want of skill. That person deserves all our sympathy, who exposes himself with courage and perfect resignation to those pains which imagination always magnifies: He should, after the agonizing moment, be laid down to rest in tranquillity, to feel, with grateful and religious thankfulness, his sudden relief from that disease which had long made life miserable. But, alas! in operations such as we have seen, resignation and courage have no reward; in every interval of protracted cruelty, the consciousness comes over him like death, "the stone cannot be extracted!" "the stone cannot be found!" Undelivered of his disease, and tortured to the utmost verge of human suffering, he is conveyed to bed, and there, amidst the silence and darkness of a sick-ward, interrupted only by



ominous sounds, he lies, “ thinking o’er all the bitterness of death.”

God forbid that I should aggravate the rumour of those accidental, but rare misfortunes, which are inseparable from our art: It is systematic ignorance I deprecate, and the presumptuous hope of becoming an OPERATOR by EXPERIENCE and PRACTICE! of learning, at the expence of humanity, that art which is not now in its infancy, which is reduced to a SCIENCE, a DEMONSTRATIVE SCIENCE, sufficient to engage men of the best talents in its study, and to afford subject of perpetual improvement throughout life.

Have I, even in your partial judgment, represented these things too strongly? If I have endeavoured to be impressive, I have been excited by the atrocious levity of others. Is there any city in which such operations are permitted? Is there any in which it would be endured, that the lives, the sufferings, of our fellow-creatures, should, even in the very hour of their agony, be the subject of savage merriment and sport? Sorry am I to say, that such, of late years, has been the character of your surgery, and the temper of your students, and that, in the conduct of your hospital-surgeons, there is too little dignity to command the shadow of respect for the institution: That their cruelties and blunders are such as no ordinary language can express, is sufficiently proved by these verses, written in levity, but importing sad and tragical truths.

“ I challenge, ye bunglers, for bunglers there be,  
Without blood or pain to cut arteries like me ;

Who, in stone and in rupture, by ways round about,  
 Leave the stone in bladder, while they bring the guts out.  
 Derry down, down," &c.

This is, indeed, a dreadful comment on your doctrines : This strikes deep, indeed, at the character of the University, at the skill of our Surgeons, at the morals of the School ; and shows, that the scenes acted in our Hospital are such, that all the best feelings of the heart are corrupted, and the sufferings of humanity become a subject of unprincipled jest and merriment.

By this shocking and most sacrilegious stanza, the world may judge how well the pupils of the school emulate the fame of the Professors in their taste for poetry, and sense of humanity. Let no man do Dr Gregory the injustice to imagine that this is any of his admirable poetry, which is but a humble imitation of the style and manner of his EPIGRAMS. It is a verse of the war-ode of the University of Edinburgh, for the year *of God* 1808. Let no man say this is a trifling, a puerile performance, unworthy of notice : " We do not throw up a stone, we cast a feather up into the air, when we would discover which way the wind blows."

## SECTION VI.

Of the SCHEME invented by Dr James Gregory, Professor of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, and Practitioner in that City, for the Administration of the SURGICAL DEPARTMENT of the ROYAL INFIRMARY. ,

The Metaphysical Professor invents a Theory admirably suited to the Exigencies of the Case, and the Accomplishments of his particular Friends, which he clenches with this droll affirmation ; “ That a Perfect Novice in Hospital Practice, and in every kind of practice, a YOUTH of ONE-AND-TWENTY YEARS OF AGE, just out of his Apprenticeship, if appointed to learn under a POTT or a HUNTER, the Disparity betwixt the Master and the Pupil would soon cease to exist.”

It is time to recur to that revolution in the Surgical department of the Hospital, of which you were the prime mover. You had, indeed, the disingenuous cunning to declare, that you “ knew nothing of Surgeons, not even their names.” That whatever the system of administration the Managers of the hospital might think fit to adopt, you would take no share in it, nor the slightest interest in the election of Surgeons, nor be any way responsible for their success. This, indeed, seemed inconsistent with your ravings about the sufferings of the poor, but it served your own sly purpose, which is all the consistency that men of penetration will look for, either in the conduct or in the assertions of Dr Gregory. You

wisely resolved to reap the harvest, but escape the toil ; to make friends for your practice, without the dangers of defending their reputation, or being involved in their disgrace. Well, Sir, so let it be : but the system was yours ; the Managers of that day cared not how it was accomplished : The SPIRIT of Dr GREGORY'S SYSTEM was all they were desirous to preserve.\* Plans innumerable were presented by *Surgeons*, but these were incompetent, ignorant men. It was the INTRIGUING PHYSICIAN only that could reform surgery : The " ESSENCE OF DR GREGORY'S PLAN WAS TO BE PRESERVED !"

That plan led to the election exclusively of your friends, and by your machinations and doctrines, a system of cruelty was entailed upon the poor.

#### \* AUTHORITIES FOR THIS ASSERTION.

FIRST, From Dr Gregory's Memorial. " Some of the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, who know and approve the general *tenor and purpose* of this Memorial, have expressed to me their EARNEST WISH that I SHOULD STATE PARTICULARLY what I conceive would be the PROPER MODE of the APPOINTMENT and ATTENDANCE of the SURGEONS in the Hospital. This I have no scruple to do," &c. " Any thing I can propose is to be regarded only as a hint," &c. Modest, good, undesigning creature !

SECOND. " If the change of election, from a permanency for life to a limited endurance, as now proposed by your Committee, of six years, shall have the effect of conciliating the minds of many of the members of the College of Surgeons, and, perhaps, thereby preventing a rupture between them and the Managers, an event most earnestly to be deprecated, the Committee humbly think the measure will be attended with the most salutary consequence ; *while, at the same time, the ESSENCE of Dr GREGORY'S PLAN WILL BE EFFECTUALLY PRESERVED.*"

*Minutes of the Managers of the Royal Infirmary.*

Believe me, Sir, in a city constituted as this is, these things cannot be misrepresented, cannot be concealed. The new elected were and are your friends: Your first friends, the Patrons of your practice. The fame they have acquired in their course of experiment, is of a kind never to be forgotten: I am afraid to think how widely it extends. Their literary works, after ten years profession of the Infirmary, and ten years experience in this school of practical surgery, amount to fifteen, or, we shall say, twenty Advertisements: Their Improvements, their "new proposals," and their old ways of performing operations, are altogether a burlesque on surgery, and a flagrant disgrace to the Edinburgh School, which should have afforded good anatomists, dextrous surgeons, and an hospital conducted so as to gratify the best hopes of the inhabitants of the city, who generously contribute to its support: The sacrilegious verses I have quoted, describe but too truly their faculties for operating; their inventions for extracting something very different from the stone; and acquiring something very different from reputation; and afford a conspicuous illustration of some unwise truths about DUNCES and HOSPITALS, which you once blundered out.\* But it turns out a very prophecy, for

"An ox once spoke as learned men deliver;

Short time since you were such, and you spoke wonders."†

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\* "If the authors of that Memorial had ever seen an ape, or even heard of the remark commonly made on that mischievous brute, they

† Don Leon, in Beaumont and Fletcher's Play, Act 3.



When the result of the experiment has been so tragical, you must not wonder if the wisdom of your plan be impeached. Your plan was founded on a doctrine, and that doctrine was sufficiently metaphysical to correspond well with all your exigencies and necessities. Legislators, they say, must propose laws suited to the genius of the people; and Dr Gregory, in legislating for an hospital, in which his best friends were expected to make the most conspicuous figure, wisely took into estimation their claims, and contrived a theory, by which TALENTS were declared to be superfluous! skill to consist in experience! and experience itself declared to be a kind of improvement only to be attained in an hospital!

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they would have known, that the higher he climbs, the more he SHEWS HIS BREECH." (N. B. Wherever the above expression, or any such occurs, whether in Verse, Prose, or Epigram; the reader may from its delicay guess, that it belongs to the celebrated Dr Gregory; whose writing very greatly resembles the delicacies inscribed in chalk, on walls and coach house doors, by boys learning to write, and vain of their skill in obscenity.) "The case is nearly the same with a DUNCE of a PHYSICIAN, or A SURGEON who is appointed to attend in a great hospital; his ignorance and incapacity must soon become publicly and indisputably known. Of all situations to which his profession may lead him, AN HOSPITAL is the WORST FOR SUCH A DUNCE; who, in private practice, might long have escaped detection, and enjoyed undeserved riches and honour: And of all the hospitals I ever saw or heard of, THIS INFIRMARY is THE WORST for SUCH A DUNCE, by reason of its intimate connection with the great Medical School in Edinburgh, the students of which, to the number of two hundred or more, every year attend it, and are very able and willing, and have always been encourag-

Thus, every man, on first entering upon the duties of an hospital, was presumed to be equally ignorant, every man equally acceptable ; and every man engaged in such duties, perfect and skilful, in exact proportion to his years of service.

This was, indeed, an admirable theory, and boldly proposed. The hypocrisy of putting any kind of value on talents or education, or affecting to establish an election on the principle of public reputation and superior skill, you never were guilty of. You virtually denied that Anatomy was of any kind of use to a Surgeon, by your old metaphysical train of argument, viz. " That a man might be an Anatomist, without being a Surgeon ;" \* an argument truly

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ed, and never needed to be encouraged, by the Professors, TO JUDGE FOR THEMSELVES, and to DRAW INFERENCES FROM WHAT THEY SEE. These judgements and inferences, to my certain knowledge, they are accustomed to express with such freedom, as would effectually prevent any dunce from acquiring undeserved fame ; and probably, would soon be ruinous to any dunce who should presume to act permanently as Physician or Surgeon to the Infirmary."

*Professor Gregory's Memorial, p. 162.*

\* " Further, granting that an operation is a dissection, I humbly conceive that there are very different kinds of dissections, and that many a man, who can perform one kind of dissection very well, may be a little embarrassed at first, if he tries his hand at another kind. Thus, the FLAYING AND CUTTING UP OF AN OX, (God help this poor ox) are unquestionably dissections ; so is the carving of a ROASTED HARE OR A PARTRIDGE AT TABLE ! but I believe a JOURNEYMAN BUTCHER can perform those dissections of an ox, and many a FINE LADY those of a hare or a partridge, as well as

worthy of your genius and your candour. You affirmed that any man, and every man, might become a Surgeon by EXPERIENCE! and thus provided for the indiscriminate election and rotation of any or of all your friends, dependants, and voters, in the college of surgeons. No dangerous allusion, to cultivated talents, to skill in anatomy, or genius for surgery, to careful study of precedents and facts; ever once escaped you in all your loose and garrulous memorials. But you went on, proving, in your own metaphysical fashion, that the least educated or skilful lad, just released from his wearisome apprenticeship, was as fit for all the duties, or at least as FIT TO LEARN all the duties, of an hospital, as the most able and valuable man in the country! and that in the course of a few months, or at least of a few years, he would rival the greatest surgeons.

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any professor of anatomy in Europe, or even as Mr John Bell himself! Yet both the BUTCHER and the LADY might be much embarrassed, if required to perform those dissections, *alias* operations, on living persons, which are often found necessary in hospitals. That kind of dissection, which is chiefly required in learning and teaching anatomy, in order to show distinctly the minute and exquisite structure of every part of the animal body, is widely different from that kind of dissection which is necessary in performing chirurgical operations. A certain degree of anatomical knowledge is absolutely necessary for operating as a surgeon with safety and success; but MANY SURGEONS, who have HAD MUCH PRACTICE, AND HIGH REPUTATION AS OPERATORS! would be SADLY AT A LOSS! if they were required to dissect and demonstrate THE MINUTE STRUCTURE OF PARTS! as is done in an anatomical theatre: and I shrewdly suspect, that many good anatomists, and expert dissectors, would feel themselves much embarrassed, if they were required to operate on the living subject.

But, Sir, in affirming this, you affirmed by implication much more; viz. that the managers of the Infirmary having appointed even the most ignorant young man to perform those duties, it was their interest to perpetuate the administration of one who had already profited by experience, and who was still improving: For it is plain, according to your new doctrine, where education contributes so little, and experience so much, to improve the skill of a surgeon, that the Managers of the Infirmary should at once adopt the youngest, and perpetuate him, having by his youth more years for acquiring experience; having by that, greater capabilities than any older man; and making up ten fold, by continued hacking and hewing, for the want of that science

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I know not what Mr John Bell and his clients may think of the professors of anatomy in this respect, but I presume, none of them can fancy themselves either better anatomists, or more expert dissectors, than Dr Monro's assistant, Mr Fyfe; yet, I doubt whether any one of them, if he had occasion to undergo a nice and dangerous operation, would choose for the operator Mr Fyfe, rather than an experienced surgeon."

*Gregory's Calumnious Memorial against Mr John Bell.*

I am far from declining the question, even in this odious and personal form; and I do declare, that if Mr Fyfe (who, though he is no more than Dr Monro's assistant, is a quiet, inoffending, and worthy man,) feels no repugnance at surgery, and no want of that courage and presence of mind which is required in surgical operations, he must be a better and safer surgeon than any of these gentlemen attempting to learn, by experience, that is, by confus-

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and skill with which he should have began his career of experience.

You have stated your doctrine in expressions as unequivocal as its tendency is shocking. You have declared, that a BOY OF TWENTY YEARS OF AGE, A LAD JUST OUT OF HIS APPRENTICESHIP, is fit to take upon him those most sacred duties ; to meet the greatest difficulties in his art ; to encounter those jealousies with which a man performing public functions is beset ; to support, by his operations and encreasing fame, the reputation of an hospital, and of a surgical school. Sir, you have had the confidence to declare in favour of your wretched adherents, that a boy of twenty one years of age is fit to take upon him those duties, *and to become in time the rival even of a Pott or a Hunter.*

The Managers of this Infirmary are destined, I believe long, to feel their responsibility for such doctrines, and to hear the indignation repeatedly excited by the bloody doings of those uneducated men. My theories are of a very different complexion. Far from repressing, with jealous or illiberal conduct, the ambition of such a young man, or preventing him entering on the more inspiring practical duties of

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ed, dangerous, and bloody incisions, on the living body, what he has learnt by delicate dissection of the dead body ; he must have a chance of knowing what he is about, when dissecting a hernia, aneurism, or other tumour. The Metaphysical Professor has just discovered, to his everlasting honour, that those WHO HAVE PASSED FOR OPERATORS in this CITY have been most CULPABLY IGNORANT of ANATOMY, and that Dr MONRO and Mr FYFE are not SURGEONS. The Professor and his learned friends are welcome to all the benefits of this interesting discovery.



his profession, he should, I think, have his chance of being promoted to those distinguished offices, in exact proportion to his known enthusiasm, and diligence in study. But, far from imagining such a boy fit to bear up the reputation of a surgical school, I think, and I know, that having just escaped from his apprenticeship, he is just prepared for entering upon study ! and that a mob of such gentlemen, learning by experience, and operating promiscuously, must bring dishonour on any public institution.

It is difficult, at any time, to distinguish, in your voluminous disorderly libels, the confusion produced by turbulence of temper, from the ambiguity contrived for selfish purposes : But this opinion is most unequivocally and repeatedly expressed ; “ that even though a perfect NOVICE in HOSPITAL PRACTICE, or in EVERY KIND OF PRACTICE, for example, a youth of TWENTY YEARS OF AGE, who has just finished his apprenticeship and his education, were appointed to succeed as eminent a surgeon as Mr Pott, or Mr Hunter ! though the evil would be great, it would be but transient ; after a few months it would be every day growing less ; and in a few years would no longer be felt, or supposed to exist.”\* I pity the managers of an hospital seduced, by any combination of circumstances, to put their trust in so cunning a creature as you are ; who, in the very moment of talking about an ELECTION of surgeons, teach them that they are not to seek for talents ! not to elect surgeons of acknowledged skill ! but to MAKE THEM, and to make them of any materials, and then compare such things with Hunter, Pott, and Dease.

“ ————— inutile lignum ;  
 Cum faber, incertus scamnum faceretne Priapum,  
 MALUIT esse DEUM.”

Your PLAN, and your intrigues, had been long ripening in secret, before they burst upon the world in that defamatory memorial, which, now that your genius and propensities are known, the managers, or those who remain of them, must be sorry ever to have acknowledged. It must grieve them to reflect that they have become parties in the malignities and scandals of an intriguing, turbulent physician, acknowledging his scurrilous memorials as the grounds of those resolutions which should have been so pure and so impartial. It must grieve them to remember that they had the ill fortune to dignify with the title of PLAN, a manifest PLOT, an invention for conveying a public institution to a COPARTNERY of SURGEONS and their ADHERENTS.

The question never was, whether the despicable system of rotation should be perpetual, but whether this should be the fate of the institution: A fate which, upon every point, of right, of reason, and of charity, it was my duty and every man's duty to oppose. Your purpose never was a secret: The first and sole condition required by the Managers of the Infirmary, was an unconditional acquiescence in the “ Essence of Dr Gregory's plan.”

It would have been extraordinary, indeed, if you had had no subscribers to your plan, since the simple act of subscribing, ensured election; most extraordinary if “ those gentlemen, who agreed entirely with you in opinion,” or in other terms, your party in the College of Surgeons, had not subscribed. Thirteen did accordingly SUBSCRIBE, viz. the two PRESI-

DENTS, the COPARTNERY, and the FOUR INFIRMARY CLERKS. It has been with me matter of astonishment, that managers intending honestly, should take no alarm at such a muster of surgeons under the patronage of an intriguing physician ; while thirty one independent members of the Royal College signified no such acquiescence in Dr Gregory the Professor's plan. Was it fit that men, needing no arts to promote their reputation, should submit their experience and reason to such a mandate, and subscribe a plan contrived by a physician, whose purposes were more than suspected, and who knew no more of surgery than of the art magic. It would have been most unaccountable, indeed, if independent or able men had been struck with the preposterous ambition of subscribing to such a plan, or exhibiting among the operators which such a system was likely to produce.

My opinion, Sir, has never varied : It was and is, “ that the Essence of Dr Gregory's plan,” was more important to his own success in life, than to the honour of the Medical School, or the safety of the poor : And had it not been so, the Younger Surgeons, the Shylocks, might have mangled for ever uninterrupted by this very charitable physician.—“ That the essence of that plan” was, to procure, at the critical time when Mr Benjamin Bell was inclined to retire from more active scenes, the character of Operators, and the benefit of a public station, a property and exclusive possession of the infirmary to his remaining Copartners and Heirs, and to their dependants and adherents : That it was their policy, and their determined purpose, to occupy this station while they could, trying (to use your courtly lan-

guage,) “to carve a reputation from the limbs of his Majesty’s leiges;” failing which, they knew well how to ensure the point next desirable: by delivering it to their clerks and dependents, they were sure to have no rivals.

It was not reserved for me, Sir, to describe the success of their operations; their fame, “married to immortal verse,” extends wherever our young students wander, from the rising to the setting sun, and is as freely discussed in foreign climates, as in this city. Your friends, and by friends I distinctly mean, the partizans of your cabal, and the patrons of your practice, have been occupants, possessors and proprietors, of the Infirmary FOR TEN YEARS. There, Sir, is both the “ESSENCE,” and the CAPUT MORTUUM of your plan, its first concoction, and perhaps its final extinction.

But to have done with your Essential Plan, and to speak of the administration of the Hospital. What is it now? You call it an election! I call it a rotation! an unvarying rotation amongst the YOUNGEST SURGEONS!—nay, worse, a succession and an inheritance: The suspicion of independence, or the ill repute of being possessed of talents or emulation, would defeat any man’s claim.

In a commotion and revolution such as you excited in the Royal Infirmary, every thing partakes of the spirit of the inventor, and yours is known not to be over-delicate in regard to truth or ingenuousness. Before your machinations were ripe, or the question could be brought to a vote, the rotation of the surgeons (for at that time they attended by rotation)



had descended to a point most critical for your doctrines. On the last day of January 1800, the youngest surgeon had finished his course of operations; the next in rotation was the OLDEST member of the Royal College of Surgeons; and the Royal College of Surgeons had so increased in number, that had the ELDEST SURGEON been permitted to succeed in course, the duty would have continued to devolve among the elder surgeons for many years, and Dr Gregory, and his precious friends, would have had but a limited possession IN COMMON with other and better operators. In the face of this fact, you had the hypocrisy to publish your declamations about the YOUTH, the INEXPERIENCE, and the CRUELITIES of younger surgeons! you knew that your precious copartners were put to this dilemma, of accepting in rotation, or allowing the duties to devolve on me and others, whom you knew to be no way deficient in zeal, talents, nor charity! and you were aware, that if the elder gentlemen of your party did accept, according to the existing constitution, they retained no permanent possession, they passed off in rotation, and could not directly devolve the charge to their younger partners, or helpless dependents, that it would pass by rotation to men of a middle period of life, whom you, in your hypocritical cant, designated YOUNGER SURGEONS.

If this critical moment was lost, all was lost; and you hurried on the Managers with indecent precipitation, with impetuosity, and a singular spirit of intolerance, and of rudeness, to resolutions which required the most deliberate, impartial, sober inquiry.



At an irregular meeting, anticipating the business of the ensuing year, was this inauspicious PLAN OF PROFESSOR GREGORY's proclaimed; its operation taking place on the first day of January 1801, to PREVENT the accession of the older surgeons.

But for the help of this disingenuous contrivance, this PRACTICAL UNTRUTH I may call it, your precious friends would have been ruined. They would, through policy, have been obliged to operate in the Infirmary without EXCLUSIVE POSSESSION; and with no other superiority than their very moderate talents could give them. On that inauspicious day was instituted that law, which ensures a perpetual UNINTERRUPTED ROTATION of YOUNGER SURGEONS! Sir, I deal in no ambiguities; I speak direct and plain: I shall state, First, The law,—Second, The principle of the law,—Third, The fact.

FIRST, This is the essential law by which the surgical duties of the Infirmary are now regulated; “That one or more of the Junior Surgeons shall ATTEND EVERY DAY at the usual hour, to examine and TAKE NOTES of the patients applying for admission or advice! and shall REPORT CONCERNING THEM, to the ORDINARY SURGEONS, *who* are to judge which of them are proper patients to be admitted into the Hospital! and shall *alone* have the power of admitting patients into the surgeons' wards: And, such as they think improper, or who decline coming in, shall have advice in writing from the JUNIOR SURGEONS!”

SECONDLY, This being the law, let us see the effect of that law! Had it been the purpose of the Managers of the Infirmary, as it was unquestionably

the policy of your friends, to contrive an **EXCLUSIVE SYSTEM** to perpetuate a succession of **YOUNG UNEDUCATED MEN**, to exclude every man of education, every one capable of hospital duties, or deserving of so honourable a charge, they could have imagined nothing more effectual than this.

The term **JUNIOR SURGEON** has a meaning, under the plan of the Metaphysical Professor, altogether unknown in former times, or in other cities. The most **LEARNED, EXPERIENCED, and SKILFUL SURGEON** in Europe, were he to be struck with the unaccountable ambition of exhibiting his talents in the Edinburgh Infirmary, would have the singular appointment conferred upon him, (i. e. if he were honoured with the approbation of the Managers and the patronage of Professor Gregory) of **JUNIOR SURGEON** to the **ROYAL INFIRMARY**!

Here, Sir, is the character of the Infirmary system, and the stamp and seal of your subtile genius. This is the very **ACT** of **APPROPRIATION** by which you have Entailed to your Copartnery, and their associates, the possession of the Infirmary. This is the **ACT** of **EXCLUSION** by which you intercept every man of respectable talents, or professional reputation. This is the law: Now for the theory or “**ESSENCE** of Dr Gregory’s plan.”

**THIRDLY,** The system is a system of learning by **EXPERIENCE**! and so stern and unyielding, that not the slightest acknowledgment is allowed to **TALENTS** or **EDUCATION**, or that reputation, which, though acknowledged over all the world, would be here of no avail. Every man who enters this extraordinary

school of surgery is PRESUMED to be IGNORANT! and it is unquestionable, that most of the operators support the doctrine to a miracle. Every man is REQUIRED to learn by experience, and that of the most singular description: Though standing high in the greater system, he would, the moment he entered into this corps, be turned back to the lowest station in the service: No man would be permitted to enter into competition with this company of Commanders, before he has submitted to tokens of a discouraging and humiliating nature, never, till he has had his coat turned, and been drilled through the ranks.

Indeed, Sir, I fear that the Managers of the Infirmary have had very partial council; that they have considered the effects of this system too little; while you, and the "gentlemen who agreed with you in opinion," have considered it too well. The station assigned to all who might have been willing to operate in the Infirmary, is such as effectually to exclude every man of reputation or talents; for it is a station incompatible with public reputation! with professional duties. According to my conception, and the general opinion of the world, a man of rank and estimation, skilful in operations, and prudent from experience and natural sagacity, is alone entitled to so high and responsible an appointment as that which you are willing to make over, under any pretext, to any the most obscure uneducated person: And it is difficult to imagine that a man so qualified, would begin his education anew, or make it any part of his ambition, to learn the art of surgery under the

masters of the Edinburgh Infirmary, or endeavour to rival them.

Is it possible, is it consistent with your experience, that a man of high character, though he might be willing to take upon him the charge of a public institution for a limited period, would be willing to become the competitor at elections, of such young surgeons as swarm about this hospital? Could he be guilty of the unaccountable folly, of serving, under the Youngest Surgeon of the Edinburgh Infirmary, an apprenticeship of four years, with the intention of becoming in the fifth year, his successor and rival in operations? Would this kind of ambition be any proof of his confidence in the reputation he had already acquired? Would it promote his fame? Would it be any sign of prudence, that he became responsible for such a system, or a party in such disorderly operations as are celebrated in the descriptions of your poetical rival? I do really think, Sir, that this station of JUNIOR SURGEON, and this apprenticeship of four years, is "inconsistent with professional reputation," and that the negative title I have formerly hinted at, "NOT SURGEON TO THE ROYAL INFIRMARY," is more desirable than any that could there be acquired.

And it is equally "inconsistent, Sir, with professional studies." That may very well be reckoned experience to your young friends, the racers and runners of your copartnery, and the voters and agitators of your party, which would not seem very edifying to a man educated and accomplished for so great a

charge as that of an Infirmary. I may seem to affect too high an opinion of the accomplishments necessary for such a station, but surely I err on the safer side, and approach nearer to the truth than you, who place the needful talents on so low a level. Would it be decent or seemly, that a gentleman long past the rudiments of study, and the occupations of a school-boy, should be employed in the Waiting-Room of the Infirmary, attending as a sort of menial upon the operating surgeon, transcribing for his use the names and ailments of Janet Wilson, Mark Pringle, and Philip Clark; to catalogue their sores and ulcers, and describe them? These vexatious and trivial occupations, these details of necessary duty, suit the ambition and the capacity of very young men, and have their use, but are very uninteresting indeed, to a gentleman who is master of his profession. Nothing can account for this **ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLE** of your **PLAN**, but your extreme and culpable ignorance of this branch of our common profession, or your having kept your imagination continually occupied with the interests of a set of gentlemen, of such singular accomplishments, that they might be supposed to find improvement even in this servile station, and who were not very unwilling, (using one of your most polite figures,) “to creep up into an hospital through the common sewer, or down the chimney.”

You thus provided expressly and **EXCLUSIVELY** for young gentlemen learning by **EXPERIENCE**! what they had never learnt in any better or more charitable way! the character you have proscribed,



and the kind of being you have patronised, are indeed very opposite; and, he who was friendly to the one, could not but proscribe the other, and make such proscription the “essence of his plan.”

A man of reputation, who loves his science, continues, though involved in practice, to select subjects of study, and devotes to them every moment that can be spared from the duties of his station. He sets himself to investigate singular and interesting diseases, and finds it no way degrading to watch, by the bed-side of the poorest patient, to enquire about every symptom, to describe and record every singular appearance, and every painful feeling, attendant on his disease. But to the man capable of reasoning on these phenomena, who has passed through all the gradations of his profession, and still continues to study it, even amidst the distractions of practice,—the trivial details of a case-book, or the routine of a waiting room, can hardly be very instructive.

THIS SCHEME of APPROPRIATION, Sir, is admirable in its contrivance, and must effectually congregate about the hospital, groups of busy clerk-like young surgeons, working their way by the most contemptible drudgery to the most ridiculous eminence. The drudgeries of a waiting-room attendant, are as different from the studies of a well educated surgeon, as the occupations of a counting-house clerk, from the philosophical speculations of a Neck-er or a Calonne. You observe, I always take a pleasure in contrasting my conceptions of professional education with yours; and I declare it to be my persuasion, that the duties of the waiting room, the tran-

scribing the simple records of ulcers, and fractures, and dislocations, must occupy, in unmeaning drudgery, the time which should be devoted to study: That a man thus educated is INCAPABLE of the charge of an hospital: And we know, by not a little experience, that an hospital clerk will drudge on, taking such cases for ten years, without improving any more than your musical operators on the Earthen Mound: So stationary is this boasted experience in every thing which relates to genius.

That such station is as incompatible with public character, as with professional duties, or with improvement in science, is very plain. I should like to be informed, how, without danger to his reputation, a surgeon, known, respected, employed, or any way worthy of confidence, could venture to become a competitor for this appointment, even if it were an object worthy of his ambition? To accomplish such an election, he must pass through various mortifying scenes: FIRST, A candidate seemingly on the score of professional skill; confident that he were not wanting in manual dexterity; that his studies in anatomy, surgery, and dissection, had been diligently and most faithfully performed, and that he were not deficient in humanity, in just conceptions of the duties of an hospital, and in kindly feelings towards the poor. He could imagine it possible that his claims would be overlooked; unaccustomed to the policy of elections, occupied with studies, not with intrigues, he would believe that the competition for such a station, were a mere competition of skill; when, good, innocent

soul, he would find himself engaged in a different matter; in a competition of interest with some ignorant creature, whose father, uncle, or brother, held seats, permanently, in that Court of Directors, and who were busy and eager in his dear interest, in exact proportion to his ineapacity. The man of talents would find his character assailed by those arts, in which you are known to excel: His moral character and dispositions traduced by lying insinuations, or denounced to the public in scurrilous quartos, or defamed in advertisements stuck upon the walls of the COLLEGE! and for no fault but that his professional reputation stood high in the opinion of the world.

This one question, Sir, with which I must beg leave to conclude my argument, I must address, not to you, but to all honourable men,—“What surgeon of reputation would become a competitor for such a station, or expose his reputation to this ordeal, to the enmities of such a pamphleteering, advertising, reviewing, lecturing society, as you and your friends have organized for the maintenance of their mutual interests, and the support of disorder, anarchy, and calumny in this city?

These, Sir, are my objections to the “essence of your plan.” The title and office of JUNIOR SURGEON to the ROYAL INFIRMARY, is incompatible with that professional reputation, which a man should have attained before becoming candidate for such a charge; inconsistent with those professional studies which every man of real genius or right ambition will delight to continue through life; it is an abuse

of time, and a public degradation, which no man ripe in years or reputation will allow, at a period of life when time and character become precious. The "essence of your plan" is, to put the succession to the office of OPERATOR in the Royal Infirmary, in a DESCENDING SERIES, ensuring a rotation of the YOUNGEST and most IGNORANT SURGEONS. It is essentially a contrivance for excluding men of reputation, and appropriating the hospital.

You have been at pains, Sir, to prove, that the most ignorant, uneducated creature, even at one-and-twenty years of age, may learn by mere EXPERIENCE to perform operations. You have, indeed, interposed a qualifying clause in this affirmation, viz. that he might learn in a few months to perform the public duties of an hospital as well as his brethren. I wish you had been altogether explicit, and used the expression which was plainly in your mind, and which Mrs Hamilton has since inscribed with so much truth to us as a national proverb—"At least they may do weel enough."

You have also been so sanguine in your expectation of sheer experience prevailing over the best combined plans of study, as to believe, that being the first surgeon among such a set of operators, would be a sure means of becoming one of the FIRST SURGEONS IN THE CITY. But you have neglected to explain how it is possible for the most celebrated surgeon of the city to become any thing but the LOWEST SURGEON OF THE INFIRMARY! or how it will be possible for the Managers of that institution to reconcile that bad eminence, with the pride which a



professional man, well educated, and well respected, is entitled to indulge !

Were it possible that a man of education and talents should be struck with the singular ambition, of enrolling himself among a band of operators, whose achievements are celebrated by such hymns ; and willing to become a responsible partner of such surgery ; he could not refrain from casting his eye over the roll of senior surgeons, under whom he were destined to serve a new apprenticeship of four years. Upon my life, Sir, it will be difficult to find a gentleman of our profession, well educated, or well respected, who will consent to make it a part of his system of education to learn operations under Mr Newbigging, or of his ambition to practise them under Mr Erskine, or of his daily occupations to attend the waiting-room, and receive patients under Mr William Wood.

THIRD. I have stated, first, the LAW, second, the PRINCIPLE, or “ essence of that law ;” now for the FACT. I believe, Sir, your experiment is at an end : but you know best how far it must go ! Your doctrine of making surgeons by EXPERIENCE, is not confirmed by any conspicuous successes : Resignations have taken place in very critical circumstances, and elections have become difficult, not exactly from the competition of men of distinguished talents. The difficulties have been of a very different complexion ! Emulation in experimental surgery is almost extinct ; it is suspected, perhaps, in consequence of your unrelenting experiments, that geni-



us, study, and diligence, are as necessary in surgery as in any other art, and that men cannot become operators by hearing about anatomy, and seeing feats of surgery. Indeed, Sir, you have allowed yourself to be far too sanguine in your opinion of the efficacy of practice, without science. Even if Dr Gregory, with all his splendid talents, ignorant as he is of anatomy, were to imagine he could learn operations by seeing the performances of operators; he would probably have very humiliating proofs of his misconception, and would fare as ill as if he had imagined himself capable of dancing on the tight rope, or playing the harp.

A public suspicion, Sir, has also gone abroad, as public as the report of these operations, or the poetry in which they are celebrated; that even young men are shy of this title of surgeon to the Royal Infirmary, and not very desirous of becoming, directly or indirectly, responsible parties in these public operations. And there is cause, Sir, for more than mere rumour and suspicion, there is a sort of proof of the fact. The last election (I think, Sir, you call it an election) for surgeon to the Royal Infirmary, was in the month of October 1809. There came down from the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, to the President of the Royal College of Surgeons, a mandate or request, that he should call a meeting of his college, and signify and circulate their desire, that "those gentlemen who wished to be *elected* surgeons of the Royal Infirmary, should make profession of their willingness to undertake the duties, and transmit their names. The President, with a simplicity

altogether peculiar to himself, did call such a meeting ; and when the College were assembled, felt himself not a little perplexed. One gentleman stood up in his place, and desired to know “ whether the purpose intimated in the billet was the sole purpose for which the College was convened ? ” Being answered in the affirmative, he proceeded thus : “ Then, Sir, it is the most unparalleled piece of insolence and effrontery, that ever was practised towards so respectable a society ; for this Election, to which we are invited to subscribe as candidates, is already concluded, and this invitation a very mockery.” It was very confidently denied, that the election was already concerted and concluded. To a flat contradiction, there could be but one reply,—to name the man ! The name was called for, and the gentleman who protested against this collusive and disingenuous practice, named Mr William Wood, son to Mr Andrew Wood, MANAGER of the Royal Infirmary. And when the time arrived, this gentleman was accordingly elected.

I quote this public conversation, this recent fact, as a pleasant specimen of what you call an ELECTION ! and, indeed, Sir, if I were not restrained by that public declaration which you have made, with all the truth and ingenuousness so inseparable from your nature, that you “ know nothing of surgeons, and nothing of their quarrels ; that you know hardly their names, and certainly do not know WHO AND WHO ARE TOGETHER ; that you will at no time endanger your immaculate honour, by taking the most remote interest in Elections.”—Were I not restrained by the modesty and delicacy of your na-

ture, I should have the boldness to ask you many questions, not mere questions of curiosity, but interesting to the public in a public cause: And in the "widow's cause, the poor man's cause," what should not the "chivalrous and honourable spirit" of Dr Gregory do, which is, as he declares, the perfect definition and demonstration of a gentleman? Surely, in the widow and the orphan's cause, Dr Gregory will once more enquire the truth, and tell it.

Was this gentleman the oldest and most respectable member of the College of Surgeons, or was he the youngest eligible? Was he the most conspicuous, most diligent, student in this university? Were his opportunities of becoming learned in his profession, excellent in dissection, and perfect in all that might accomplish him as an operator, beyond all question or exception? Was he the person in this city the fittest to be charged with the reputation of a public institution, and the care of the poor? Was he distinguished above all his competitors for talents and acquirements? Or had he not the singular felicity rather of having no competitor?

If there were many competitors at this election, who are they? Who were the candidates at this last election who were the competitors of Mr William Wood? Was it on account of their youth and incompetency, that they were rejected, when he, apparently the youngest surgeon on the roll of the College, was preferred to that station of responsibility: Was it from want of respectable education, talents, or public reputation, that others were slighted, while he was preferred? Has this gentle-

man been conspicuous during his studies, or is he now the ornament of the Royal College of Surgeons, and the public choice of the Managers of the Hospital, “bound (as you ingenuously remark) to procure for the patients the assistance of the most skilful surgeons in this city!—bound as strictly as they are to provide wholesome food and comfortable cloathing for the poor?” Have his proficiency in learning, and his public reputation, discouraged all competition; or his opportunities of becoming excellent in dissection, and perfect in all those arts been such as might accomplish him as an operator, as defy all competition? Was he the professional man in this city the fittest to be charged with the reputation of a great public institution, and the care of the poor? I believe, Sir, he had the singular felicity to have no rival, a circumstance much happier for him than those hereditary talents and laborious acquirements, to which the public will naturally be inclined to attribute his election. If there was that competition which the fair and open election of an hospital surgeon should excite, give us the names of those competitors! If there were none, I think it probable that we have arrived at the end of Dr Gregory’s course of experiments; and the managers should thank God for it, say no more of what is past, and provide with prudence, wisdom, and good faith, for the time to come.

Surely, Sir, “there is something more than natural in this, if our philosophy could find it out.” I am confident, that there are many young men in this city, either deterred by this gentleman’s superiority



of talent and genius, or discouraged by the interests he is honoured with, or unwilling to become parties in this tumultuous scene, where young surgeons, and none but young surgeons, are busily employed in fulfilling the EXPERIMENT, which constitutes the “essence of your plan!” in learning by experience! Glancing my eye over the almanacks of the past and present years, I find Dr Andrew Inglis, learning surgical operations under Dr Andrew Wardrop! Dr Brown learning from Dr Andrew Inglis! Dr Thompson learning under Dr Brown! Mr George Bell under Dr Thompson! Mr Newbigging under Mr George Bell! Mr Erskine under Mr Newbigging! and Mr William Wood learning from all of these gentlemen to excel in operations! These are the gentlemen, who, with their occasional visitors, and their yet unelected friends, occupy the consultation-room of the Royal Infirmary, busily employed, with one consent, learning, and teaching, and practising, and consulting, and operating! prosecuting your doctrines with a degree of zeal and earnestness, worthy of the occasion, and with such singular success, that it now attracts the curiosity of all the medical world.

You were rash, very rash, Sir, in your invectives against younger surgeons, and their experience and cruelty; for, I believe, there are now ten young surgeons swarming about the hospital, for one that then officiated; and I leave it to the profession, and to the world, to judge, when learning by experience forms the “essence of the plan,” and a passion for operations is the chief spur to the ambition of your surgeons; when all the reputation they can ever ex-



pect to obtain, is to be won there amidst scenes of blood; when the training of, in succession, young assistants and busy clerks, accumulates men of this description, well connected with each other:—I leave the public to judge, whether prudence will be the character of these NEW “MULTITUDINOUS CONSULTATIONS?” whether these gentlemen will steadily oppose, in each other, the yet ungratified passion for public exhibitions? Whether there is not some danger of mutual, amicable, and conciliatory compliances, more dangerous to the subjects of their skill, than that impatience in argument, and that collision of opinions, which might set limits to their ambition of exhibiting, and prove favourable to delay those prudent measures, natural to men who reason on principle, and decide without partiality.

You really must have a very crazy partiality for your own system, and a very different conception of Elections, from what I, or any sober-minded person can have, if you persist in calling this an election. Sir, an election implies a seeming respect for talents; a competition of genius, or acquirements: But this is plainly a rotation of the youngest, and, according to your inference, of the least skilful of the College of Surgeons: A rotation where no OLDER, or more skilful surgeon ever can appear. I wish it may not become in process of time an inheritance, and be assimilated with the other establishments of this city, where EVERY PROFESSOR of MEDICINE is HEREDITARY; where many surgeons have the same unquestionable claim to talents; where not a few of the Managers of the Royal

Infirmaries have succeeded to their respective progenitors. I am verily persuaded, that were all the Hunters, and Bailies, and Abernethys, and Lynns, the Scarpas, and Sues of other cities, transported to this, they would find no admission to public institutions, no mercy for their talents. Were a constellation of such men, capable of redeeming at once the character of your University, and of your Infirmary, willing to be elected, though educated in the fairest, and noblest principles of their profession, they would, by entering into competition with your learned friends, but expose themselves to reproach: You, even you, accused though you be of every ungentlemanlike crime, “convicted of deliberate violation of truth,”—would find arguments against their veracity, or honour.

An election! a competition of talents! Sir, before the Managers of the Infirmary can affect to proceed in Elections, they must observe that constitutional law, by which the freedom of political Elections is ensured; they must take away all means of offence, and suspicion of danger: They must burn publicly your calumnious memorials, and remove your dissolute soldiery, your troops of mercenaries, a day’s journey from the city.

I am really amused, Sir, when I hear this term, Election, so misapplied; but it reminds me of an election story, which, in compliment to your refined taste for stories, I shall briefly relate: A candidate for certain burghs north of the Forth, was scouring the country for votes; when his travelling barrouche, new and splendid as the occasion required, overtook a butcher of the neighbouring town, driv-

ing a calf before him, twisting and twirling its tail, while it grunted and staggered onwards.—“ Well, John,” (says the Baronet, to whom John’s vote was very desirable,)—“ well, John, how do you do, and how’s the family ?” “ All bravely, please your honour.” “ Hadn’t you better come into my carriage, John ? I’ll put you down at home.” “ Why, aye, (says John, scratching his head, and hesitating) with all my heart, please your honour ; but what will I do with my calf ?”——



These are the improvements in our profession ; these the benefits to the poor, resulting from your notions of excellence in Surgery, and your reforms in the Infirmary !

Should you have the audacity, after feeling how much you have benefited by intrigues, to ask, “ What could I gain ?” I should fearlessly reply, All that a loose-principled intriguing physician could desire ! friends, dependants, patronage, and practice !—Future years, and feelings which your perturbed and agitated spirits enable you now to repress, will tell you what you have lost.

FINIS.

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